HINDUISM:

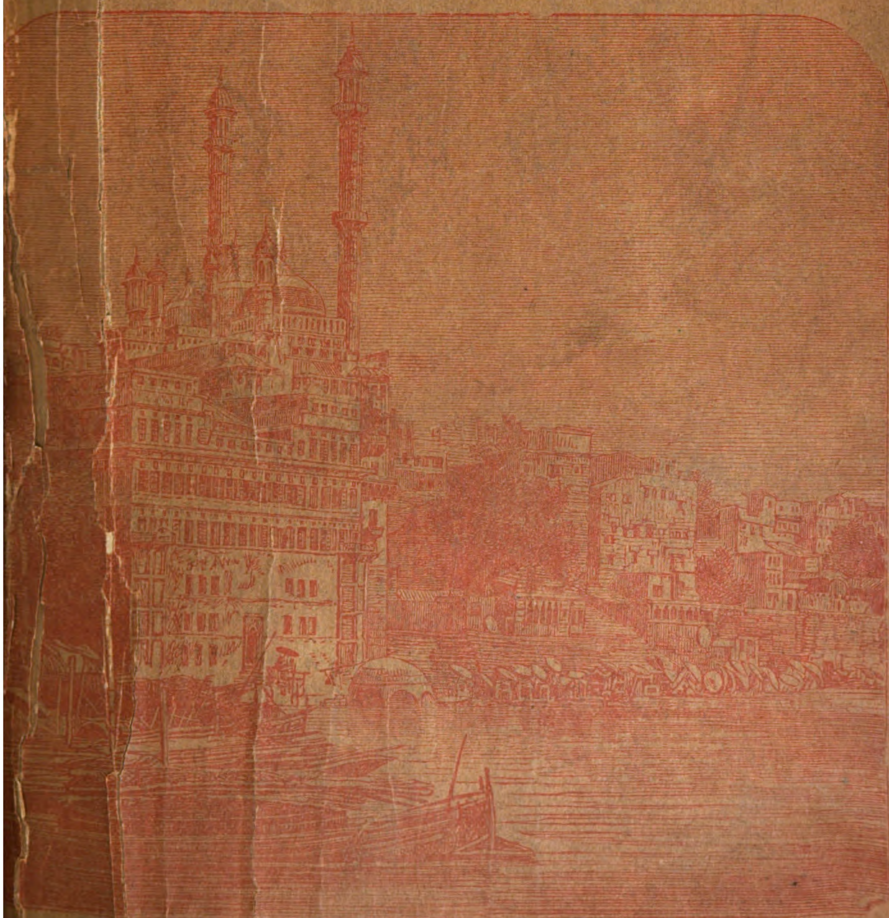
ANCIENT AND MODERN.

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OF THE

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Judicial Service, and Fellow of the University of Allahabad.



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Hinduism: Ancient and Modern

AS TAUGHT IN

Original Sources and Illustrated in Practical Life.

BY

RAI BAHADUR LALA BAIJ NATH, B. A.,

OFFICIATING DISTRICT AND SESSIONS JUDGE, GHAZIPUR, UNITED PROVINCES, AND FELLOW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD,

WITH

An Introduction by His Holiness Swami Ram Tirathji Maharaja, M.A.

New Edition—Revised and Enlarged.

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To

THE VENERABLE

The Late Swami Bhaskaranand

OF BENARES.

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED

BY

ONE OF HIS LOVING DISCIPLES

AS

A TOKEN

OF

LOVE AND REVERENCE.

PREFACE.

THIS is partly a reprint and partly an enlarged and amended version of some papers contributed by me to the National Oriental Congresses of Paris in 1897, and of Rome in 1899. The first section now headed, "Social and Personal," is in part a reprint of a paper contributed to the *Oriental Congress* of Rome under the title of "The Religious Situation of the Hindu Society in India," while the second section is an enlarged version of the concluding portion of that paper. The third section, headed "Philosophy," is partly a reprint, with some additions and alterations of a paper contributed to the *Oriental Congress* of Paris in September 1897, and published in their report, while its second portion is an elaboration of the concluding section of that paper. Section IV is an entirely new section.

The object of the publication is to present the teachings of Hinduism, as gathered from its most authentic and recognized sources, on all important phases of the social, religious and philosophic life of the Hindus, in a simple manner, free from unnecessary details, technicality, and all controversial matter, in order to induce modern Indians to approach their religion in a more appreciative and reverent spirit, and foreign thinkers to study it in a spirit of greater love and sympathy. The treatment is in no sense full or exhaustive, but I hope that with the present revival of Hinduism so noticeable in India, others possessing greater knowledge and wider opportunities for observation, will take up each of the subjects treated of in these pages in greater detail and do fuller justice to them than I have been able to do.

My studies of the Hindu S'astras in the original, my visits to many of the chief places of India and Europe, and my observation of the daily life of the Hindus have left upon me the deep impression that the future of this country lies neither with the out-and-out revivalist, nor with the out-and-out iconoclast who would entirely alienate himself from the past, and would have Hindu Society remodelled according to methods of present Western culture. The latter mistake has been made in France, with the

result that the French are now less prosperous as a nation than they were before. On the other hand, I also feel that the Hindus cannot, like any other nation of the world, wait and let their social and religious institutions take care of themselves, nor claim perfection for all that is taught in the S'astras, ancient or modern. The only course, therefore, open to them, is to adopt ancient institutions to modern circumstances, retain so much of the old as is suited to modern times, and gradually make the necessary changes in the remainder. These, I believe, are the lines on which the best and most thoughtful of Indian reformers have moved in the past and are moving at present. I do not advocate the doctrines of any sect or cult of Hinduism, ancient or modern, but have only ventured to give a brief outline of Hinduism in its most catholic spirit, and feel that in spite of all differences of caste or sect, there is still much common ground upon which all Hindus could meet and work for their country's good. My advocacy of Sanskrit as the common national language of India for purposes of higher religious instruction, and the improvement of the vernaculars for conveying the same to the masses, will, I hope, have the sympathy of not only my Hindu, but of my foreign readers also. On the other hand, in holding up Rama and Krishna, as described by their contemporaries, as national ideals, I feel almost sure of the reader's concurrence in the conviction that, without a human person or persons to whom a nation could assimilate its life, it cannot be great. I have described both these heroes only as men, though the highest and the best men in India; and I think that, apart from the disputed question of their being incarnations of the Deity, their lives *as men* furnish the loftiest ideals for modern educated Indians to follow. I have, therefore, tried to show at some length what they really did as *men*, and not what they have been represented to be by their unwise admirers or by their adversaries. My advocacy of the Vedántic ideal of religion is based upon my deepest conviction that it has always been the religion of not only the hermit or the recluse, but of the wisest and the best men of India engaged in the busiest affairs of life, as well as of the wisest and the best of other countries also. The conditions of a country may largely influence the lives and character of its people, but human nature can be changed but little by extraneous circumstances, and I feel that, taking it as it is, the religion of the Vedánta

is as suited to modern times as when the Upanishads were taught by the Rishis in the forests, when the Institutes of Manu were promulgated, when the Mahábhárata was recited by Vyása to his pupils and the Puranas written in his name by later writers, when Indian reformers, like Buddha, Sankara, Kabir, Nanak or Chaitanya promulgated their respective cults, or Súr Dás sang of the greatness of Krishna, and Tulsi Dás of that of Rama. By far the largest portion of the quotations made in these pages is from the Mahábhárata, because it embodies the teachings of Hinduism on almost every important subject of religion and philosophy in the fullest possible manner, and affords a complete picture of Hindu Society in the palmiest days of its civilization in a manner unparalleled by any history or epic, ancient or modern. In all cases the translations have been carefully made from or compared with the original. I, however, feel that in many places I have failed to do justice to the beauty or the terseness of the original, and hope that the reader will kindly remember that I am writing in a foreign language with which I am imperfectly acquainted, and which does not often admit of exact expression of Eastern thought, especially in its higher philosophic aspects. If these pages contribute towards stimulating the study of Hinduism in a spirit o love and sympathy among their readers, my labours will be amply rewarded.

AGRA, *December* 1899. BAIJ NATH.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE favourable reception accorded to the first edition of Hinduism, Ancient and Modern, and the many kind notices both in the press as well as by scholars in and out of India, have encouraged me in bringing out a second and greatly enlarged edition of the book. At the suggestion of several scholars some portions have been re-written, others greatly enlarged and much new matter added regarding the past and present religious and social condition of India. The book is now more than double the size of its predecessor. Of course, in any attempt to show the past of a religion or society, you have greatly to depend upon books, which, in a country like India where historical observation has not always been as accurate in point of periods and dates as elsewhere, may be greatly tinged with the individual views of their authors, On the other hand, in attempting to describe the present, your observation may be defective or limited. I am fully conscious of both these defects. All that I claim is to describe Hinduism in the present and the past from recognized sources and as much of personal observation as I can command. I have also tried to keep clear of the too common tendency to belittle everything that cannot be traced to a Western source, or which has not met the approval of Western scholars, or to take everything contained in Sanskrit as gospel truth and every institution of Indian society as perfect.

To the Introductory chapter have been added papers on what is Hinduism, the Hindu idea of time and the chief sources of our religious literature. In the portion, "Social and Personal," the papers on Caste, the Sanskaras, and the Asramas have all been revised and greatly enlarged with reference to the statistics of the last census, the progress of reform in the various reform bodies in the country and the popular views on the subject. In the paper on the "Life of the Hindus in the Past as well as the Present," some additional information has been given regarding the ways of our people and the causes of decay of our civilization. The por-

tion dealing with the Religions of India has been entirely re-cast with reference to the doctrines of the various religious sects, both ancient and modern, their attitude towards reform in the parent religion, the influence of their doctrines upon the lives of their followers, and their numerical strength as gathered from the latest figures. The accounts are necessarily very brief, but they will serve to indicate generally the line taken by their originators and followers in the direction of reform. In describing the popular Hinduism of the present day, attempt has been made to trace the history of the worship of some of the objects of worship of modern times, and how such worship can be purified. Some account of the religion of the masses as seen in everyday life and of their code of morality, has also been given. The creeds of the people vary in various parts of the country, but their code of morality, their objects and methods of worship, except in the wildest and most primitive parts, are similar in all parts of India. In the portion relating to Hinduism as illustrated in Practical life, much additional information has been given regarding the lives and thoughts of those who ought to form the ideals of the nation now-a-days. The portion relating to Philosophy has been re-cast with reference to the doctrines of the various schools of thought in order to compare more fully with the Vedanta the last great system which influences the thoughts and characters of the people of India, and is also finding its way largely in other parts of the world. The papers on the question of origin of the world, the various views about God, the individual soul, free-will, liberty, *karma* and the attainment of *moska* (release) have been added with a view to make the subject more complete. The chapter on "Life after Death" has been enlarged with reference to both the sastric and the popular as well as the view of European scientists on the subject. The last portion, headed "Miscellaneous," contains papers on Truthfulness in modern Hindu society--Reform movements in India--the Indian Sadhu--the Badrikasrama and Practical reform in religious and social matters. Some of these papers were contributed to the East and West Magazine of Bombay. Others have been written for the purpose of this work. A most powerful and learned Introduction has been very kindly added by one of the worthiest and most earnest of India's sons, His Holiness Swami Rama Tiratha Ji Maharaja, M.A. The Swami is a graduate

of the Punjab University in Mathematics. He was for some time a Professor of Mathematics in Lahore and retired from the world at the age of 27, about five years ago, simply to realize the ideal of Vedánta in practice. For several years he lived alone and secluded in the caves of the Himalayas with the Upanishads for his companions. Then in 1901-1902 he came down to the plains and lectured to large audiences in several parts of India. In August 1902 he left for Japan Thence he crossed over to America where he lectured to large and appreciative audiences in the colleges and the universities on Indian Religion and Philosophy, creating deeper interest in this country and its people. He has now returned to India to devote himself to the service of his countrymen, not from any motive of reward, but because to him every son of India is his own self, and to realize the Vedánta not in books but in life by devoting one's self to the good of all, is the religion of the Sruti of India. His Introduction has added greatly to the value of the book, and will, I hope, be found to be of interest to the reader. May the book be a means of rousing the Indians to study their ancient religion in a spirit of love and reverence and reform their institutions in accordance with the ideals of the past, adapted to present needs, and foreigners to approach Hinduism in a spirit of sympathy is the wish of the author, and if these pages conduce towards that end, in however small a manner, his labours will be amply rewarded.

GHAZIPORE,
July 1905.

BAIJ NATH.

INTRODUCTION

BY

HIS HOLINESS

Swami Ram Tiratha Ji Maharaja, M.A.

THIS work embodies a faithful representation of the actual facts about Hinduism, and a fair and accurate account of the religious and philosophic views held in ancient and modern India. It is written by a sincere and earnest reformer—a leading worker among the people. The style is worthy of an impartial judge. The author has admirably described the past and present condition of India. The present condition, however, might be discouraging to some. Rama will here say a few words about the future of India, which promises to be hopeful and bright.

Everything in this world "moves rhythmically," and the law of periodicity governs all phenomena. In accord with this law should move even the sun or star of prosperity. There was a time when the sun of wisdom and wealth shone at the zenith of glory in India. As seen through the eyes of history, this luminary, like other heavenly bodies, began gradually to march westward and westward. It passed over Persia, Assyria, and further west. Egypt saw it shining overhead. Next came the turn for Greece. After that Rome enjoyed the noon of glory. Then Germany, France and Spain were duly waked up by the Light.

At last England began to receive the dazzling splendour of the sun of prosperity. Westward, ho! travels the sun and brings America to the high swing of forture. In the United States the Light spread in the usual course travelling from New York (or "the East") westward and westward till it reached California (or "the West"). When it was day in India, nobody knew America. Now that it is day in America, the night of poverty and pain is hovering over India. But, no; the sun seems already crossing over the Pacific Ocean, and Japan bids fair to be among

foremost powers of the world, and if the laws of Nature are to be trusted, the sun of wealth and wisdom must complete his revolution and shine once more on India with redoubled splendour. Amen!

Reviewing the past history of India we find, as in the case of any other country, an ultimate internal cause of India's night to be no other than Exclusivism. "How glorious is the broad daylight in this room (India)! Oh! it is mine—mine! Let it belong to me alone." So saying, we practically pulled down the curtains, shut the doors, closed the windows; and in the very attempt to monopolize the light of Ind created darkness. God is no respecter of persons, nor is fortune geographical. We ceased to incorporate in our lives the divine truth of One-ness-feeling (*Tat-tvam-asi*); we were divided and weakened. The great wrong which the leaders of the nation committed was to lay more stress on their (self-seeking) rights than on their (self-denying) duties to their children—the lower classes. Be that it as it may, by the very necessity of situation, the matters are taking a most hopeful turn. Those who sleep well, wake well. India has slept long enough. Most surely, though slowly, the lethargy is breaking; and most surely, though slowly, Conservatism is playing liberal to adapt itself to the altered conditions.

The principle of progress demands differentiation of form and function, but integration of spirit and feeling. The Hindu caste system was due to the national advancement expressing itself beautifully in organized *division* of labour and occupation and the union of spirit and heart. But in course of time the form came to be exalted above the spirit, the natural order was reversed; evolution gave room to dissolution, and there we had *division of love* (*spirit*) and *mixing up of labour* (occupation). Members of one caste often took up the occupations of other castes, and yet the anicent caste feelings kept the hearts even more estranged than before. The abnormal development of skin-consciousness (caste prejudices) buried the real self (*Atman*, God) under a heap of transitory names, forms and limitations. The *Shruti* (Vedic wisdom concerning the eternal self) was practically made a dead-letter, and *Smriti* (Law-codes dealing with the ancient customs and affairs) was made the tyrant's staff. The latter dominated over the spirit. Some one says, "Grammar is the grave of language." Yes, try to

save the grammar, keep it invariable, and thereby the language will be dead. Just so the rigidity of laws, customs and *karma-kând* saps the vitality of a nation. Up to a time the laws and rules are helpful like the husk for the protection and preservation of the seed, but if not changed after a while, they became the choking prison impeding all growth. Bear in mind, dear people, the laws and smritis are for you, you are not for the laws and smritis. Spread universally the teachings of eternal Shruti, but adapt your smritis to the need of the day. Let the heritance of smritis belong to you and not you to the heritance. The rivers have changed their beds in India, the snow-lines are shifted, forests are replaced by cultivated fields, the face of the country is altered, government changed, language changed, colours of the inhabitants changed; yet in this inconstant, transient world ye seek to perpetuate the rules and customs of the past which is no more! Sad, indeed, is the state of one who is all the time looking behind while he wants to walk forwards. Such an one must stumble at every step.

Life evolves on the principles of *heredity* and *adaptation*. The laws of heredity reigns supreme in the lower kingdoms. It is the predominance of the principle of adaptation or education that distinguishes man from the animal and the plants. The pretty little baby is just as unintelligent and silly as the infant puppy; nay, the puppy or polly is often more intelligent than the little Adam. But the difference lies in this that, whereas the little dog or the parrot has at the time of birth inherited almost all it required for its perfection, the child will or can through adaptation and education bring the whole world under his sway.

My beloved Hindus! By aversion to change or adaptation, laying too much emphasis on the old customs and *heredity*, pray, degrade not yourselves below the level of man.

You live in time as well as space. You are descended from the ancient Rishis of India, but you live not in their age now, do you? Steam-engine, steam-ship, telegraph, &c., are at you; you can no longer shut yourselves off from the present world; your struggle is with the twentieth century scientists, artists and workmen of Europe and America; you cannot escape it, and if you please observe carefully, you will see that you cannot survive except by making yourselves fit to live in the altered environments

of this age. If you are not willing and ready to assimilate the New Light, which is also the old, old light of your own land, go and live in *Pitri-loka* with the forefathers. Why tarry here! Good bye!

Rama does not mean that you should be denationalized. A plant assimilates the outside air, water, manure and earth: but does it by that turn into the air or water or the earth? No. Similarly should you by absorbing and digesting the outside materials develop and flourish, with the original life of Shruti still beating in your breast and bosom.

The object of education should be to enable us to utilize the resources of the country. Proper education should enable the people to make the land more fertile, the mines more productive, the trade more flourishing, the bodies more active, the minds more original, the hearts more pure, the industries more varied, and the nation more united. The capability of quoting big long texts to show off our learning, nonsensical hair-splitting to torture the sense of passages in ancient scriptures, the study of subjects which we never have to use in life, is not education. The taking in of knowledge which we cannot give out in practice, is spiritual constipation or mental dyspepsia.

It is a matter of satisfaction that, in spite of all surface discouragements and bitter but lifeless opposition, steadily and surely, the Hindus are acquiring proper education, showing necessary adaptation; the social laws of past ages are becoming less stringent, and the caste system is resuming its more natural proportions. Instead of being scared by Western Science, the Hindus to-day welcome her as the greatest ally to their own Brahma-Vidya (Shruti).

As to Hindu marriage, the different communities, often headed by the most orthodox and learned Pundits, are enacting sociae laws to increase the age of marriage; and now and then suitable inter-marriages are also tolerated.

Apparently the question of food has gained such undue dimensions amongst the Hindus, that some have nicknamed our religion as no more than "kitchen-religion." But, in spite of all our fuss, our energy on the point has been misdirected and dreadfully wasted. We never examined scientifically what to eat and how to eat. As you eat, so will your acts and thoughts be. You can-

not get out of a machine what is not put into it. It is silly to expect muscular or brain work from persons who never took any food for the muscles or the brain. From vegetables, grains and fruits we could easily make a proper selection to supply us with the necessary amount of nitrates and phosphates to keep up high mental and physical activity. Is it not a pity that we prize *ghee* so much which contains not a particle of food for brain or muscle, and we despise barley, such an excellent food, for students? Pepper, condiments and medicines undermine the system, pervert our natural tastes, invite all sorts of weakness, disease and death. Carbonates, like butter, sugar and starch, which serve only as fuel to the lungs and supply no nutrition for the muscle or the brain, are valued out of all proportion; the consequence is that lethargy, drowsiness and exhaustion become inevitable. Let Gnanam (Science, Knowledge) guide our eating (Annam)!

The Sádhûs of India are a unique phenomenon peculiar to this country. As a green mantel gathers over standing water, so have Sádhûs collected over India, full fifty-two lacs by this time. Some of them are indeed beautiful lotuses—the glory of the lake!

But a vast majority are unhealthy scum. Let the water begin to flow, let there be marching life in the people, the scum will soon be carried off. Sádhûs were the natural outcome of the past dark ages of Indian History. But now-a-days the general spirit of reform, inasmuch as it is changing the feelings and tastes of the householders, is affecting also the Sádhûs. There are springing up Sádhûs who instead of remaining as suckers and parasites to the tree of Nationality, are anxious to make of their body and mind humble manure for the tree, if nothing more.

The sense of dignity of labour, the religion of unselfish activity, so long orally repeated by millions of the Gita-students, is at last being more or less realized in practice in the land of Krishna.

"And live in action! Labour:
Make thine acts thy piety:
Casting all self aside;
Contemning gain and merit;
Equable in good or evil
Equability is *Yoga*, is piety!

Deep devotion and keen discrimination is observable among some of the laity as well as the Sádhûs. And any one who is duly acquainted with the external and internal, ancient and modern situation of India, can see without difficulty that the future religion of educated India must be

PRACTICAL VEDANTA; OR

Renunciation—through Love—in Action.

True action is not separable from true love and true wisdom. The religion of Shruti (Practical Vedanta) makes every act, feeling and thought of our life a *yajna*, an offering to the *devas.*

Deva in the Vedantic language means the Power-giving life and light to the different faculties; and the *deva* or *devata* of a faculty, *indriya* or sense, implies that faculty, *indriya* or sense taken cosmically. (Cf. *Adhiatmik* and *Adhidaivik.*) The *devata* of *chakshu* (or sight) is the sight of all beings, called *Aditya* and only symbolized by the material sun or the world's eye. The devata of hands is the power in all hands and is named *Indra.* The devata of feet is the power in all feet styled Vishnoo, and so on. Thus true *yajna* or sacrifice to the *devas* means offering or dedicating my *individual* faculties and senses to the corresponding cosmic powers. Offering to *Indra* would mean working for the good of all hands in the land. Offering to Aditya would mean realizing the presence of God in All eyes; honouring and respecting All Eyes; offending no eyes by unworthy conduct; presenting smiles, blessings, love and kindness to whatsoever eyes may turn upon you; and offering youreyes to the All Sight with such a devotion that the egoistic claim being entirely given up, the All Light Himself may shine through your eyes. Sacrifice to Brihaspati is dedicating my intellect (thoughts) to all the intellects in the and or thinking for the good of the land as if myself were none else than my countrymen, merging my interests in the interests of the people and exulting in their joy.

In short, Yajna implis realizing in active practice my neighbour to be my own self, feeling myself as one or identical with all, losing my little self to become the self of all. This is crucifixion

of the selfishness, and this is resurrection of the All Self. One aspect of it is usually styled *bhakti* and the other is called *gnáni*.

O All (Om !)—

Take my life and let it be
Humbly offered, All, to Thee.
Take my hands and let them be
Working, serving Thee, yea ! Thee.
Take my heart and let it be
Full saturated, Lord, with Thee.
Take my eyes and let them be
Intoxicated, God, with Thee.
Take this mind and let it be
All day long a shrine for Thee.

This dedication being thoroughly accomplished, one realizes the blissful significance of *Tat-tvam-asi* ("that Thou Art").

Do you wish to be a patriot? Tune yourself in love with your country and the people. Feel your unity with them. Let not even the shadow of your present personality be the thin glass partition between you and your people. Be a genuine spiritual soldier laying down your personal life in the interests of the land. Abnegating the little ego and having thus become the whole of the country, feel anything your country will feel with you. March, your country will follow. Feel health, your people will be healthy. Your strength will begin to pulsate in their nerves. Let me feel I am India—the whole of India. The land of India is my own body. The Comorin is my feet, the Himalayas my head. From my hair flows the Ganges, from my head come the Brahmaputra and the Indus. The Vindhyachas are girt round my loins. The Coromandel is my right and the Malabar my left leg. I am the whole of India, and its east and west are my arms, and I spread them in a straight line to embrace humanity. I am universal in my love. Ah! such is the posture of my body. It is standing and gazing at infinite space; but my inner spirit is the soul of all. When I walk, I feel it is India walking; when I speak, I feel it is India speaking. When I breathe, I feel it is India breathing. I am India, I am Shankara, I am Shiva. This is the highest realization of patriotism, and this is Practical Vedanta.

Peace like a river flows to me,
Peace as an Ocean rolls in me,
Peace like the Ganges flows—
It flows from all my hair and toes.

Through the arched door
Of eyebrows I pour
And sit in the heaven of heart
There well do I ride
In glory, and guide,
And no one can leave me and part.

Merry wedlock, union,
On earth or in heaven,
Is a dim foreshadowing symbol
Of my perfect embrace
Of the whole human race
And my clasp so firm and nimble.

As the golden lance
Of the sun's sharp glance
I pierce the hearts of flowers.
As the silvery ray
Of the full moon gay
I hook up the sea to my bowers.

O Lightning! O Light!
O thought, quick and bright!
Come, let us run a race.
Avaunt! Avaunt! Fly! Fly!
But you can't
With me even keep pace.

O Earths and Waters,
My sons and daughters!
O Flora and Fauna!
All limitations flinging
Break forth into singing
Hosanna! Hosanna!

Om!

RAMA.

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HINDUISM: ANCIENT AND MODERN.

PART IV.—*Life after Death.*

Miscellaneous.

HINDUISM: ANCIENT & MODERN.

सत्यंवद्धर्म्मंचर

Speak the truth and act righteously.
(Taitreyopnishad.)

सत्यमेवजयतेनानृतं

Truth alone conquers, not untruth.
(Mundakopnishad.)

INTRODUCTORY.

I.—General.

Hindu society is passing through a period of transition due to its coming in contact with a civilization in many respects different from the traditions under which it has hitherto existed. Such contact must become closer every day, and the question naturally forces itself upon the minds of all who wish India to resume its proper place among the progressive nations of the world, what must be the direction in which she should move, in order to escape the fate of nations which, in spite of a past as brilliant as hers, had to succumb in the modern struggle of life, because of their inability to assimilate their past with the present. Here, as everywhere else, we have thinkers of all shades of opinion, from iconoclasts of the most pronounced type, to advocates of a policy of *laissez faire*, from those who see nothing good in the past, to those who see nothing but good in the past, and who believe the salvation of India to lie in her reverting to her past. On the other hand, we find foreign thinkers either holding all Indian civilization to be entirely dead, or deducing from it lessons which can scarcely encourage Indians to foster it. For instance, Professor Seeley thinks India to be "all past and with no future," while, according to Professor Huxley, here we have "the descendants of a people full of life and vigour, who were always ready to brave the gods themselves in battle when their blood was up, 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,' frank pessimists or at best make-believe

optimists. The courage of the warlike stock may be as hardly tried as before, perhaps more hardly, but the enemy is self. By the Tiber as by the Ganges, ethical man admits that the cosmos is too strong for him, and destroying every bond which ties him to it by ascetic self-denial, he seeks salvation in absolute renunciation."—(*Evolution and Ethics*, page 17.)

There are two tests which may be applied to determine the future of a people, and the rank it is likely to occupy among contemporary nations in the world:—(1) What it can incorporate from its past into its present, and what it can reject as unsuited to its present requirements. (2) How far its social institutions allow the free-est play to individual action and individual progress, consistently with the progress of the whole. How far they curb the individual's purely selfish appetites and desires and afford room for the development of his unselfish energies, how far they replace private gratification by gratification resulting from the happiness of others, determines the degree of success which the institutions of a nation are likely to attain in shaping its future. Modern European civilization claims to proceed upon this basis. There the interests of the individual are being more and more subordinated to those of the society in which he lives, and while the free-est play is afforded to individual progress, the sympathetic side of man's nature is being also gradually unfolded, in order to make him recognize that it is in the happiness of others that his own happiness lies. Was this the case in ancient India also, and is it the same here now-a-days, is the question?

Every reader of the great religious and epic literature of ancient and medieval India, must have been forcibly struck with the fact that the social institutions of those times, like those of modern Europe, afforded the free-est play to individual action consistently with the progress of society as a whole. Dharma (righteousness) was then the moving force. Duty to all above him, all around him, and to all below him, was the guiding principle of the Hindu's life. Externals in religion did not occupy the place of religious truth. There was little or no disqualification from birth in the way of every one attaining to the highest end of man. Every one could move in the sphere he was best qualified for. Women had their proper place in society. Do your duty without regard to personal gain or personal comfort, even at the sacrifice

of life, was the goal of the Hindus of those times. There is therefore no wonder that they attained to the high degree of civilization which they reached. And the decline of their successors was in proportion to their departure from their ideals. And yet in no period of their history have the Hindus been altogether lost to the law of truth, duty and self-abnegation observed by their ancestors Even during the most depressing regimes which followed the loss of their independence, they showed in the field a spirit of courage and devotion to the cause for which they were fighting, in the council room a sagacity and in the hermitage a keen and devoted search after truth, a desire to rise above the finite and the transitory, which have always challenged the admiration of their contemporaries. India, though fallen, was unlike other nations of antiquity never lost. Its national life, though weak, was never extinct, and it only required the better and more peaceful influences, it now fortunately possesses, to rekindle it.

There is at present much dissatisfaction in Indian society with many of its existing institutions, and the wisest and the best intellects of the country are busy in carefully examining them and finding out which of them stands in the way of its progress, and which of them furthers it. It is the same with our religious institutions also, and a return to purer forms of worship and the elimination of all accretion due to superstition or later innovation, is the goal which many an Indian is trying to set before his countrymen. The lives of the gods, and the heroes of the Hindu pantheon, are being carefully scrutinized to find out the real significance of our ancient mythology, and the true import of stories, which in the name of many gods, describe only the manifold powers of the one True God of the Rishis of ancient India.

II.—What is Hinduism

Before dealing with some of the chief institutions of our society it may perhaps be of some use to show what is meant by the terms "Hindu" and "Hinduism." The word *Hindu* is not found in the Vedas, the Smritis, the Itihasas or the older Puranas, nor is it of Sanskrit origin. In the Sastras the word *Arya* is used to denote the five tribes who lived in the early home of our ancestors who chanted the

hymns and performed the sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas. In Manu the country between the Saraswati and the Drishadwati rivers was said to be the Brahmávarta-desha, the land of the gods, and the usages prevailing there, were described by him as the usages of the good. The country known as Kurukshetra, the Matsya, the Panchala (Panjab) and Sursena (about Mathura), was known as the Brahmarshi-desha and one less sacred than the Brahmávarta. From the people of these parts the other people of the earth learnt their usages. From the Himalaya to the Vindhya mountains to the east of Kurukshetra and west of Prayága (Allahabad), the country was known as the Madhya-desha (middle region). From sea in the east to the sea in the west and between the Himalaya and the Vindhya mountains, the country was known as A'ryávarta. This was the India of those days, forming a part of the Bharat-khand, probably the continent of Asia, which in its turn was comprised in the Jambudwipa the world of that period. (Manu, Chapter II. 17-22.) The word *Hindu* is apparently a corruption of *Sindhu*, the name of the Indus river in the Panjab, and *Sapta Sindhu*, the country of the seven rivers of the Vaidic literature was known as the *Hapta Hindu* in the Zend, and the Hindavas in the old Persian literature and the Panjab of to-day. Later Persian writers use the word *Hindu* as signifying *black*. It would, therefore, be a double mistake, first to call *the whole of the Aryan people* as described by the Vedic and subsequent writers to be Hindus, and then to attempt to trace back all that now goes under the name of Hinduism to the purer sources of the Aryan religion. Manu called the usages of the good by the name of *dharma*, without any addition whatever, and it may be nearer the mark to trace to ancient times so much of the modern usages as can be traced and try to purify them in the light of what ancient lawgivers laid down as the indications of *dharma*. They were not only the Vedas and the Smritis, but also the usages of the good, righteous behaviour, and satisfaction of one's own conscience. Hindu, Hinduism, Hindustan can, however, no longer be discarded without creating much confusion and giving rise to much misunderstanding. But if we keep in mind the fact that Hinduism is the name given to a vast social organization composed of divergent elements by foreigners, and that the ideal to be aimed at is the purification of our society, we may keep the name and explain some of

our institutions with reference to our ancient books. Both foreign and Indian thinkers who have attempted to construct from observed facts one definition, which would be applicable to Hindu society of to-day, have failed in their attempts to do so. The elements are too complex and diversified to admit of such a definition. Sir Alfred Lyall describes "Hinduism to be the religion of all the people who accept the Brahminical scriptures, as a tangled jungle of disorderly superstitions, as a collection of rites, worships, beliefs, traditions, mythologies, that are sanctioned by the sacred books and ordinances of the Brahmins, and are promulgated by Brahminic teaching." Sir Denzil Ibbetson describes it to be "a hereditary sacerdotalism, with Brahmins for its Levites, the vitality of which is preserved by the social institution of caste, and which may include all shades and diversities of religion native to India, as distinct from the foreign importation of Christianity and Islam, and from the later outgrowths of Buddhism, more doubtfully of Sikhism, and still more doubtfully of Jainism." Mr. Risley, Census Commissioner for India, at page 351, Volume I. of his Census Report for 1901, describes it to be "Animism more or less transformed by philosophy, or, to condense the epigram still further, as magic tempered by metaphysics." The fact is, says he, "that within the enormous range of beliefs and practices which are included in the term Hinduism, there are comprised two entirely different sets of ideas, or one may say two widely different conceptions of the world and of life. At one end, at the lower end of the series, is animism, an essentially materialistic theory of things which seeks by means of magic to ward off or to forestall physical disasters, which looks no further than the world of sense, and seeks to make that as tolerable as the conditions permit. At the other end is pantheism combined with a system of transcendental metaphysics." On the other hand, one Indian writer describes 'Hinduism to be that which the major portion of the Hindus follow,' and another calls the Hindus "to be those who accept the Vedas, the Smritis, the Puranas and the Tantras as the basis of religion and the rule of conduct who believe in re-incarnation in one Supreme God Brahma and in the law of retributive justice." Each of these definitions is correct, but only partially. The Census Commissioner's would have approached nearest to the mark so far as modern Hindu society is concerned, if he had

omitted the word *two* both from the sets of ideas and the conceptions of the world and of life. To say that Hinduism is that which the majority of Hindus believe or follow, or that it is that which is not Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Mazdaism or Hebraism, or that it is a tangled jungle of superstition or beliefs, rites, traditions and mythologies found in Brahminical books, does not help us in knowing what it is. There are, however, some basic ideas which are common to all who are now known as the Hindus. These are—(1) distinction of caste, (2) the supremacy of Brahmins, at least in theory, (3) the sacredness of the Vedas and the cow, (4) the law of Karma and re-incarnation and a belief in God. These beliefs are more or less current in all Hindu society wherever it may be found. If you call the holders of these beliefs to be followers of the *Sanatana dharma*, you will have to use the term in a wider sense than that in which it is now used. *Dharma* is that which supports and holds together, and *Sanatan* is ancient. Therefore the principles of a healthy and pure life, both in social and religous matters, would go more under the name of *Sanatan dharma* than dogma. Paradoxical as it may seem, *dharma* is eternal and therefore there is no necessity of calling it *Sanatana*. In ancient India, also, the difficulty of defining *dharma* was felt as much as it is now. Says Yudhisathira in the *Mahábhárata* in reply to the Yaksha's question as to what was the path : "Argument leads to no certain conclusion, the Srutis (Vedic texts) are different from one another, there is not even one Rishi whose opinion can be accepted as infallible—the truth about religion and duty is therefore hidden in the cave of the heart, that alone is the path along which the great have trodden." (*Vana Parva*, Chapter 312.)

The only thing, therefore, possible is, to take those of our institutions which form the basis of our society and describe them as they were in times past and as they are now, and show how they could be reformed or remodelled to suit existing conditions. The task is one of great magnitude requiring both time and knowledge more than I can command. But if I succeed in directing attention to the salient features of our society, I shall not have written in vain.

III.—The Hindu Idea of Time.

I would start with giving the Sastric idea of time, together with a brief account of some of the most revered sources of our religion. No Hindu undertakes anything without a *sankalpa* (will-desire), and this sankalpa tells him without the aid of books the various divisions of time known to his ancestors. He is told that it is the half of the second part of Brahma's day, the Vaivaswat Manvantara, and the first quarter of the Kali age, together with the year, month, date and day of the ceremony. The day of Brahma, the Manvantara, and the Kali age are not known to the generality of readers, and I shall therefore describe them from the sastras. Modern thinkers in the west dismiss the Hindu's idea of time with a smile of contempt and limit the origin of the Vedas to not more than 4000 B.C. Formerly it was much less. But now this is the generally received period. On the other hand, the Hindus look upon both the Veda and the world as beginningless (Anádi); and birth and death of the individual or creation and dissolution of the world are nothing but the objectification and subjectification of Brahman. Dharma (truth-duty) is without a beginning. Its phases may vary, but absolute truth is the same, was the same, and shall be the same everywhere. Hinduism is, therefore, the only religion which has no personal founder, because truth and duty, which are its essence, are without beginning. The modern mind does not accept this, and requires to know its origin, but without success.

The sastras are, however, not without definite ideas of time. According to them, one *Káshthá* consists of fifteen *nimishas* or twinklings of the eye, thirty *káshthás* make one *kalá*, thirty *kalás* make one *muhúrta*, thirty *muhúrtas*, a day and night of human beings, thirty days and nights a month, which is divided into two fortnights, the light (*shukla*) and the dark (*krishna*), six months make an *ayana*; and the year is composed of two *ayanas*—the *Uttarayana* (the northern path), and the *Dakshinayana* (the southern path). The *Uttarayana* is the day and the *Dakshinayana* the night of celestials. A thousand years of the celestials constitute the Kali yuga, whose two twilights are of a hundred years each. Two thousand years with two twilights of two hundred years each constitute the Dwâpara yuga, 3,000 years with two twilights

of 300 years each, the Treta, and 4,000 years with twilights of 400 years each, the Krita yuga. Four thousand of such yugas constitute a day of Brahma, whose night is as much. Fourteen Manvantaras pass in each day of Brahma. At the end of his day, the whole of creation merges into its primeval constituents, to emerge at the commencement of the next. Brahma's life consists of a hundred years, and at its termination, there comes a Mahákalpa. All forms and names assigned to objects in one Kalpa retain their potentiality when merging into Brahma, and, like seasons recurring in their order, recur in each successive Kalpa. The cycle of creation rolls on from Kalpa to Kalpa subject to the law of Karma, from which there is no escape except by knowledge. One Manvantara of Hindu Chronology thus consists of 306,720,000 human years, and if we multiply this by 14, we get a day of Brahma. This is the Sástric idea of time, and the ordinary Hindu does not question the correctness of their statement. To those who look upon the world as only 6,000 years old, this attitude of his may appear to be very unhistorical, but if we take the various yugas as representing distinctive stages of progress in the history of society, there should not be much room for argument. The Krita-yuga may be regarded as the age of truth when dharma or virtue flourished in perfection, the Treta, marked the first advent of evil, the Dwâpara was the stage, when virtue and vice were nearly balanced, and the Kali, when the former had declined. In the Krita, asceticism, in the Treta, truth, in the Dwâpara, sacrifice, and in the Kali, charity, are mentioned by the sastras as means of saving mankind. The description of these yugas, as given in our books instead of being poetic imaginations, also seem to mark the progress of our society from simpler to more complex forms. There may be exaggeration in some of the descriptions, but the root ideas are apparently true. For instance, taking the present *Kali* age, its description in the *Mahábhárata* is applicable in many respects to Hindu society of the present day, and shows the clearness of the vision of those who had the India of the future present to their mind's eye. We are told, "that men shall practise morality and virtue deceitfully, and, with false reputation for learning, deceive their fellows. In consequence of the loss of truth they will be short-lived, covetous, subject to wrath and lust. Brahmans and Kshatriyas will descend to the level of the lowest orders, men will till low lands, employ even the banks of streams for cultivation, make very young cattle draw the plough, rob helpless persons and widows and orphans of

their possessions, as well as disregard all distinction of what ought to be eaten and what not. People will die young, as well as marry and beget children early. They will be filled with anxiety for means of livelihood. Their possessions will never be much. They will perform rites and ceremonies as listeth them and without a knowledge of the ordinances. Wealth will be the only source of honor. Every one will be in want. The clouds will not pour showers in season, nor crops grow in abundance, and anxiety and discontent reign everywhere." (*Mahábhárata Vana Parva*, Chapter 190. In another place we read, "People will always be in fear o dearth and scarcity. Deprived of wealth, they will be subject to famine. Women will have many children and little means. Those who possess money will alone be respected. Wealth will alone secure supremacy. No one will part with the smallest fraction of wealth at the sacrifice of personal interest. The grains of the earth will be poor and of little substance. Gifted with little sense people will be subject to infirmities of both mind and body, early decay and death." (*Vishnu Purana* VI, Chapter 1.) Accounts of the lives of persons, who are mentioned by the Rishis as having flourished in each of the other periods, also show that they were not altogether wrong in their descriptions of the yugas. In the Dwapara age, when virtue and vice were equal, heroes like Krishna, Bhishma and Yudhishthira, guided the destinies of the nation. In the Treta, Rama and Janaka, and in the Krita the Rishis of the Vedas and the Upanishads, furnished ideals of life for subsequent generations to follow. The *Mahábhárata* describes the Krita "to be the age of men of great strength and great power, great wisdom and handsome features, possessed of the wealth of asceticism, capable of great exertion, possessed of high souls, and virtuous and truthful in speech," and the Kshatriyas of the period "as able-bodied, of agreeable features, brave and well skilled in battle. In the Treta the Kshatriyas ruled from sea to sea. In the Dwapara also they were brave but desirous of conquering one another, while in Kali they became subject to jealousy, pride, anger, deceit and covetousness" (*Mahábhárata Bhishma Parva*, Chapter 10.)

The hymns of the Rig-Veda and some of the older Upanishads show that the description of the first two yugas above given, applied in some measure at least to the Rishis who sang their hymns of praise to the gods on the banks of the five rivers, and to kings and

sages who ruled the India of those days. Sanat Kumara, Narada, Yagyavalkya and Vasishta among Rishis and Janaka, and Ajatsatru among kings may be said to belong to that age. The *Rámáyana* of Valmiki relates to Treta and the *Mahábhárata* describes the India of the close of the Dwapara age, and the lives of their chief characters show how far the Aryans of those periods adhered to truth and duty, and how both had gradually begun to decline among them. Mr. B. G. Tilak in his Arctic Home, in the Vedas (pp. 453, 454), comes to the conclusion, that the home of the primitive Aryans was about the North Pole, the Meru of the Puranas and that when that home was destroyed by glaciation, the Aryan people that survived the catastrophe carried as much of their religion and worship as was possible under the circumstances, and the relic thus saved from the general wreck was the basis of the Aryan religion in the post glacial period. In this way 10000 or 8000 B.C. marks the destruction of the Arctic home of the Aryans, 8000 to 5000 B.C. their migration from their original home and roaming over parts of northern Europe and Asia in search of lands, 5000 to 3000 B.C. the Orion period when some of the Vedic hymns were composed, 3000 to 1400 B.C. the period when the Taittiriya Sanhita and the Brahmans were composed, and 1400 B.C. to 500 B.C. the pre-Buddhistic period when the Sutras and the philosophical systems made their appearance. How far this is likely to be accepted by other scholars both in India and in Europe remains to be seen, but there ought to be no hesitation in accepting the position finally taken up by Vyasa "that the righteousness which is seen in the Krita age in Bráhmanas is now seen in those who are possessed of self-control, and are devoted to asceticism and learning. Those who follow dharma, observe vows and visit sacred places as enjoined in the duties relating to each yuga, from motives of acquiring heaven or obtaining worldly objects, or for the destruction of others, are said to represent the Treta, the Dwapara and the Kali-yugas." (*Moksha Dharma*, Chapter 233—37 and 38.)

We cannot therefore say that Hinduism has no history. It cannot give the exact dates of the siege of Lanka and the battle of Kurukshetra, and reigns of kings like Rama, Janaka, Yudhishthira, nor of the compilation of the Vedas, the Smritis, the Darshanas, the Puranas and the Tantras. But each stage of its civilization is well marked, and there is no difficulty in tracing the origin and

growth of its institutions from age to age. It would have perhaps been better if accurate records of dates were kept in India as in other countries, but the absence of the latter does not stand in the way of our inquiring into our chief institutions. The art of writing has long been known in India, but all instruction was up to a very late period verbal. Through it a vast mass of knowledge of every description has come down to us in a form which speaks highly of the retentive powers of the Brahmins. Indian history is not a history of wars and conquests, but of progress in literature and philosophy. It is, moreover, one—and a most brilliant one too—of a time when other nations of the earth had none. The Hindu idea of history was not one of a mere record of dates of important events, but to preserve the teachings and the memories of those who made India what it was, and the Hindus have done so as successfully as any other nation of the world. Our epic poets undertook the work of modern Bhats and Charanas and preserved the record of the great events of our history and their information, even if not quite accurate in point of dates, is yet fairly reliable as regards the social and political condition of those times.

On the other hand, those who date Hindu civilization not more than 4000 years would have—(1) the Vedic period extend from 1500 to 200 B.C., and (2) the Sanskrit period from 200 B.C. to 1000 A.D. In the first half of the first period, the centre of Aryan culture, according to them, lay around the Indus and its tributaries. In the latter half it had spread in the whole of the valley of the Ganges. In the Sanskrit period Brahmanic culture spread throughout Southern India. The literature of the first half of the Vedic period was creative and poetical, of the second half, theological and speculative, while in the Sanskrit period the Hindus achieved distinction in almost every branch of literature. This is the opinion of Professor Macdonnel of Oxford, whose History of Sanskrit literature is now the best work on the subject. Another class of writers divides the history of Ancient India into five periods—(1) the Vedic period which marked the settlement of the Aryans in the Punjab and the composition of the Rig-Veda and extended from 2000 B.C. to 1400 B.C.; (2) the epic period which marked the Aryan settlement into the valley of the Ganges, the compilation of the Vedas, the Kuru Panchala wars, the composition of the Bráhmanas and the Upanishads, from 1400

to 900 B.C. ; (3) the Philosophic period from [00 to 200 B.C. in which the Aryans conquered India, Panini composed his grammar, Yaska his Nirukta, the Grihya and Dharma Sutras were composed, Buddha flourished, Asoka promulgated his edicts, Patanjali wrote his great treatise on grammar and the Sankhya philosophy was promulgated by Kapila ; (4) the Buddhist period which was marked by the prevalence of Buddhism and the Bactrian invasion of India and extended from 242 B C. to 400 or 500 A.D. ; (5) the Pauranic period marked by the reigns of Vikramaditya, the advent of poets like Kalidass and Bharavi, of astronomers like Arya Bhatta, the author of *Surya Sidhanta*, and the *Bhartrihari Sataka*, lexicographers like Amarsingh and philosophers like Shankaracharya. This period extends down to the fourteenth century A.D. Hindu thinkers would very likely agree with both classes of writers with the exception that the compositions of the earlier Bráhmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads did not take place in the epic period, *i.e.*, at or after the time of the Kuru Panchala war, but before that. The *Mahábhárata* distinctly recognizes the philosophy taught in the Upanishads as the basis of religion, while the rites and the ceremonies laid down in the Bráhmanas, are also considered to be anterior to that epic. No Hindu is prepared to admit that the *Rámáyana* was compiled after the *Mahábhárata*, or that Rama flourished after the battle of Kurukshetra. The same remarks apply to the periods of Panini, Yaska and Kapila. All these according to Hindus flourished before, and not after the *Mahábhárata*. Kapila is mentioned by name in that great epic and the doctrines of the others are also found there. As regards Sankara, the Pandits say he came before Vikrama, for in the latter's time his commentaries are said to have been extant. With these exceptions, the course of Indian history, as traced by modern writers, may be taken as correct. But whether we take the Hindu or the modern view of the history of our civilization, we find it to be fairly continuous and can easily trace the heights to which it rose in religion and philosophy, as well as mark the steps by which it went down the scale, through neglect of arts of life and advent of superstition and dogma. Sanskrit literature not only presents a true picture of both these periods, but also furnishes abundant lessons as to what the Hindus ought to do to rise to the heights of other nations of modern times. We shall therefore

not tire our readers with discussions about the dates of the Vedas, the Smritis, the Itihasas or the Puranas, but take a brief though very imperfect survey of some of our ancient religious literature.

IV.—Ancient Sanskrit Literature.

The Vedas.

The chief source of our religion, and the basis of the whole of our social fabric, is the Veda, which all sastras declare to be (*Anadi* and *Apaurusheya*) eternal and not the work of man, but that of the Supreme Being himself. The same is also the belief of the majority of the Hindus of the present day. No higher authority is acknowledged by them in religious or social matters. All ceremonial custom in order to be valid, must be traced to the Veda. All prayers, offices of religion and philosophical speculation which are not based upon the Veda, are not binding upon the Hindus. The names of the rishis, all things that have been created, the varieties of form seen in existent things, and the course of actions, are all declared to have their origin in them. The four modes of life of the student, of the householder, of the recluse and the sage, the means of escape from the Sansara and absorption into Brahman, sacrifice, performance of all good actions, and meditation of every description are all founded upon the Veda. "Two Bráhmanas should be known, the Brahman represented by sound and the Brahman which is beyond the Vedas and is supreme. He who has mastered the Brahman, represented by the word (*Shabda*), attains to the Supreme Brahman." This is the dictum of the Vedas themselves regarding the world and what is beyond it. The word *Veda*, however, means knowledge, not merely books containing mantras uttered by certain rishis, and the above belief of the Hindus, is therefore based upon truth. "In the Krita age, when men worshipped only one Brahman, they looked upon the Rik, the Yajus, the Saman, and the rites and ceremonies performed from motives of reward, as different from the object of their worship. They then practised only *Yoga* by means of penances. In the Treta, the Vedas, the various sacrifices (tapas), the distinction between the several orders and the four modes of life, existed in perfection. In consequence, however, of the decrease in the period of life in that age, all these fell from that perfect condition. In the Kali all the Vedas

become so scarce, that they may not be seen by men." (*Mahábhárata Mokshadharma*, Chapter 232.)

The rishis, when they declare "Brahma to be the cause of the Veda," do not, moreover, say so with reference to the particular words or arrangement of words found in the published treatises now known as the Vedas, but to the intuition which prompted them to promulgate them for the benefit of the world. It is also declared in the sastras that at the end of the four yugas, the Vedas disappear, and at each new creation the seven rishis descend to the earth to re-establish them. In each age Vishnu takes an incarnation for the protection of dharma, and in the Dwapara age he appeared as Krishna Dwipayana Vyasa, to make four divisions of the Vedas on account of the shortness of human life and the diminution of human energy. Twenty Vyasas have appeared in the world from time to time. Krishna Dwipayana, known as the Veda Vyasa, took four pupils, to each of whom he taught one of the Vedas, to Paila the Rik, to Vaishampayana the Yajush, to Jaimani the Samana, and to Sumanta the Atharva. This seems to show that there was originally one Veda subsequently made into four by Vyasa, and that even these four were subsequently further subdivided into various schools or sákhás, according to the advance of Aryan society downwards into the plains of India and their increasing sub-divisions. This proves that knowledge (Veda) and not books are eternal, and that as remarked by Patanjali in his Mahábháshya, the sense of the Vedas (*artha*) is eternal, not the words (Varnanupurvi).

The Rig had two sanhitas by Indra Pramati and Bhaskli, and these again were sub-divided into four sákhás. The portion of the Rig now preserved, is that of the Sákalya school. It comprises ten mandalas and 1,017 suktas and eleven supplementary hymns. Each mandala is the work of one rishi or his descendants. The suktas are prayers or invocations to the gods, and the rishis are principally Vashishtha, Medhathiti, Devathiti, Brahmathiti, Parvata, Narada, Manu, Vaivasvata, Maún Kasyapa and others. The gods to whom the hymns are addressed, are 33 ("thrice eleven" as the Veda says). These are the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Adityas, Prajapati and Vashatkára Other hymns are addressed to Soma, heaven and earth, the Purusha, Hiranyagarbha, &c. The gods are, however, spoken of as "having all a beginning" and above them is the

Supreme Being whose commands they obey. "Bráhmanas call one *sat* by various names Agni, Yama, Mátrisvana." The gods have all the physical aspects of humanity, and are looked upon as bestowers of long life and prosperity, and the rishis feel their dependence upon them. "Thou art our keeper, wise, preparer of our path, we for thy service sing hymns of praise. Thee as protector of our bodies we invoke Thee saviour, as the comforter, as one who loveth us," we invoke. Thus they addressed their gods.

The Rig-Veda carries us back to a society happy in its simplicity. "Cheerful in spirit, ever more and keen of sight, with scores of children free from sickness and sin, long living may we look upon thee, O Surya, uprising day by day." So they wished and prayed. Truth and law were their sustainers. "Truth bears the earth, by law (rita) the Adityas stand secure" Beautiful is the story of Urvasi and Pururavas ; how she disappeared on the latter breaking the prescribed condition of not appearing before her unclothed, and how he vainly implores her to return. The myth is said to typify the dawn and the sun ; how on the appearance of the latter the former disappears. The metre principally employed is the *gayatri*, consisting of three lines of eight syllables each. The other metres are the *jagati*, consisting of four lines of twelve syllables each, and the *trishtubh* of four lines of eleven syllables each. The Rig-Veda is the book of the *hotri* priest at the sacrifice.

The Samaveda is next in order. It is the Veda of the *Udgatri* priest. It is mostly taken from the Rig-Veda, and consists of four portions, containing 460 hymns, of which only 75 are not found in the Rig-Veda. There are, according to the Vishnu Purana, not only two, but many more sákhás of this Veda. Sumanta, son of Jaimani, had two pupils, Hiranyanabha and Paushyanji. Each of these had fifteen pupils who composed as many sanhitas. At present there are only two schools of this Veda extant, the Kauthumi and the Ranayani. The Samaveda is now and then sung at Yagyas, but one cannot easily follow the chanter.

Next comes the Yajur-Veda. According to the Vishnu Purana, Vaisyampayana made 27 sákhás of the Yajur-Veda and communicated each of them to one of his disciples. Of these, Yagyvalkya was the most learned, but on account of a quarrel between teacher and pupil, he did not adhere to what the former had taught him and obtained from the sun the Ayatyama, which even Vaishampayana

did not know. Fifteen branches of this school originated from Kanva and other pupils of Yagyavalkya. The schools of the Yajur-Veda largely found in India at one time were the Katha, the Maitrayani, the Taitareya and the Vajasaneyi. They are now found only in name. Separated from its explanatory portion, this Veda is called the White or the Sukla, with it the Black or the Krishna Yajur-Veda. The Yajur-Veda is not merely a collection of sacrificial formulæ, but also contains some of the grandest hymns addressed to the Supreme Being and other lesser gods, and in it may be traced the seed of that Adwaitism which was so fully developed in the Upanishads. It consists of 40 chapters. The rishis are mostly the same as those of the Rig-Veda, with some additions like Susruta, Yagyavalkya, Asuri, &c. The metres are also the same, with some additions like Brahmi, Vrishati, Brahmi Jagati, Nichritgayatri, Arshigayatri, Virata, Trishtubh, &c. The Veda, is however, sung at sacrifices, and the notes of which each mantra is to be sung are given with it. The gods of the Yajur-Veda are greater in number than those of the Rig-Veda, and Rudra here assumes a more prominent aspect than he did in the Rig. Vishnu, who is here identified with Yagya Prajapati, becomes later on the chief of the gods, and Rudra, Sankara or Siva of Hindu Mythology. There is here a greater tendency towards unity than in the older Veda. We read, for instance, " He is verily the Agni, the Aditya, the Vayu and the Moon. He is the Pure. He is Brahma. He is the waters. He is the Prajápati. All moments were created after the resplendent Purusha. None is able to compass him in the transverse direction nor in the middle. There is no image of him whose name is the Great Glory. He is our relation. He is our progenitor, our maker. He knows all the worlds." (Chapter 23.) Its sixteenth chapter, which is known as the Rudri, is always read by its followers in honor of Siva Its fortieth chapter forms the well known Ishavásyá Upanishad. About half the hymns of this Veda are found in the Rig.

We now come to the Atharva Veda. Manu does not recognize it as one of the Vedas, and he speaks of only the Rig, the Yajur, and the Sama as the Vedas. " The Supreme Creator Brahma milked from Agni, Vayu and the Sun—the three Vedas, the Rig, Yajur and Sama for the accomplishment of sacrifice." (Manu 1-23.) It is, however, recognized in the Mahábhárata and some of the Upanishads as one of the four Vedas. The Vishun Purana

mentions its sanhitas as (1) the Kalpa which concerns rites and ceremonials ; (2) the Nakshatra which concerns worship of planets ; (3) the Vaitana which relates to the rules for oblations ; (4) the Sanhita which concerns the rules of sacrifice ; (5) the Angiras which concerns prayers for destruction of enemies, and (6) the Santi which concerns the destruction of evil. To say that this Veda deals only with magic and incantations, is therefore not correct. Its two sakhas, now extant, are the Pippaláda and the Saunaka. It consists of 20 *kándas* and 731 hymns, and is the Veda of Bráhma, the chief-priest, who superintended the whole of the sacrifice.

This is a rough outline of the Vedas. Instead of their being the outpourings of a primitive race, the evidence furnished by them points to a comparatively civilized and truthful state of society. Not only for the evolution of religious beliefs, but also for a much higher purpose, there is no study equal to the Vedas. Modern India may be disappointed in attempting to trace in Vedic hymns the achievements of modern science, as is claimed by some Indian thinkers, but in spite of all difference of time and circumstances, the study of even their Sanhita portion cannot fail to be elevating to the Hindus of the present day. To them the Veda reveals the fact that their ancestors were not satisfied with the worship of nature, but went from nature to nature's God. It tells them that the corruptions which now assail Hindu society, were neither found in the Vedic period, nor sanctioned by the Rishis, that the Veda is not responsible for idol worship, caste distinction, child-marriage, or the mythology of latter times which forms the creed of the masses now-a-days. Much of its ritual is of no practical use now, but there is still a very large portion, especially the philosophic, capable of serving as an unerring guide to all Hindus who wish to purify their own or the lives of their countrymen.

The Brahmanas.

Next to the Vedas come the Bráhmanas, the Áranyakas and the Upanishads. The Bráhmanas are theological treatises dealing with sacrificial ceremonial. The Áranyakas are treatises for the use of those who have retired into the forest and the Upanishads deal with the knowledge of Brahman and the means of escape from transmigratory existence, and are intended chiefly for those who have retired from active life. The word *Upanishad* is a compound of the

root *sad* with the prefixes *up* and *ni*, and signifies, not a mere session or assemblage of pupils gathered round their master, but according to Sankara "that knowledge which tears asunder the veil of ignorance and makes one realize and approach Brahman." It also means "esoteric knowledge or esoteric doctrine," as we find in the Taittreya Upanishad, Chapter I, 3. "We shall now explain the Upanishad of the Samhita," meaning its esoteric meaning. In the Mahábhárata, the word *Upanishad* is used for secret or essence (rahasya), for when Vyása speaks of "truth being the Upanishad of the Veda, subjugation of the senses the Upanishad of truth, and charity the Upanishad of the control of the senses," (Shanti Parva, 251-12), he means that the essence of the Vedas lies in the practice of truthfulness, and that, without the latter, a knowledge of the Vedas is of no use. Primarily, the word *Upanishad* therefore means secret knowledge, and, secondarily, the books containing that knowledge.

The number of authoritative Upanishads.

The Upanishads are many in number. From the ten or twelve principal ones we have now as many as 52—108—235, and according to some Hindu writers who assign an Upanishad to each Sákhá of the Veda, as many as 1,180. The fact seems to be that, as in other branches of literature, the Hindu writers were not wanting in multiplying the Upanishads, till we come to have not only many which betray much poverty of thought or are verbatim copies of the more ancient or even later treatises like the Bhagvad Gita, or the Panchdasi, but embody sectarian views or were written to please the fancy of the writers themselves or their patrons. Otherwise, we should not have had an *Allopanishat* presenting a strange mixture of Sanskrit and Arabic words in a rather ludicrous manner. The safest way, therefore, to find out which of these treatises is ancient and which of comparatively modern date, is to take those that show originality of thought and have been commented upon or referred to by Sankara, their earliest commentator extant, or which furnish internal evidence of their being authoritative, leaving the study of the rest to the curious or the follower of sectarian views. The authoritative Upanishads are thus the Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mándukya, Aitreya, Taittreya, Chandogya, Brihad Áranyaka and Swetáswetara, and one or two others like the Kaushitaki and the Maitreyi. Of these

the Isávásya Upanishad, as already stated, is the fortieth or the last chapter of the Samhita of the Sukla Yajur Veda, and is named after its opening words '*Isávásyam.*' It is also called the Vajsanehi Upanishad. The Kena, also named after its opening words, is called the *Tálavakára* Upanishad, and belongs to a Sákhá or branch of the Sáma Veda. The Katha belongs to a Sákhá of the White Yajur Veda, whose name is not known. The Prasna and the Mundaka appertain to the Pippaláda and the Saunaka Sákhás of the Atharva Veda, to which also belongs the Mándukya Upanishad. The Aitreya Upanishad belongs to the Aitreya Bráhmana, which in its turn belongs to the Sákal Sákhá of the Rig-Veda. The Kaushitaki Upanishad, which belongs to the Bráhmana of the same name, also appertains to this Veda. The Taittreya Upanishad belongs to the Taittreya Sákhá of the Krishna Yajur Veda. The Chandogya Upanishad belongs to the Bráhmana of the same name of the Sáma Veda, and the Bráhmana in its turn belongs to its Kauthami or the Ranayani Sákhá, but to which it is uncertain. The Brihad A'ranyaka Upanishad belongs to the White Yajur Veda, while the Swetáswetara belongs to the Black Yajur Veda. The reason why each of the Vedas had its own Upanishad was either that the knowledge portion of each of its Sákhás was so closely connected with its ritualistic portion, as to require a knowledge of the latter for a knowledge of the former, or because the followers of each Sákhá were anxious to have their own Upanishad and were too isolated to know that another Sákhá of the same Veda or another Veda had a similar body of esoteric doctrines also. And yet the identity of thought in all the Upanishads is truly remarkable, especially in the final results arrived at.

The authorship of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads are dialogues between teachers and pupils, or discussionbetween sages at kings' courts, or in the forest. In some cases the gods are declared as imparting knowledge of Brahman to men. In other cases the Rishis describe their own experiences of truth. But seldom do we find any clue to the authorship of an Upanishad, either in itself or in other contemporary or later works. Neither the style nor the doctrine helps us in this respect. Some of the Upanishads, like the Brihad A'ranyaka, give long lists of teachers through whom the knowledge of Brahman descended from teacher to pupil. Others

merely give a few names, for instance, from Brahmá the knowledge descended to Atharwa, from Atharwa to Angiras, from Angiras to Bharadwája and from Bharadwája to Angi, and from him to Saunaka The question does not puzzle the Indian student, who looks upon the whole of what is said in the Upanishads as revealed truth. To him the Upanishads are not merely guesses at truth, but truth itself. More properly speaking, they are records in human language (and therefore more or less imperfect) of what transcends human thought and human speech. "As the branch of a tree is sometimes resorted to for pointing out the lunar digit on the first day of the light half of the month, so the Vedas are used for indicating the Supreme Self. What that object which is to be proved in its nature is, is unknown either to the Vedas, which are without life, or to those who merely read them, and yet those Bráhmanas who *are truly* acquainted with the Vedas, succeed in obtaining a knowledge of the object knowable by the Vedas, through the Vedas." (Mahábhárata Udyoga Parva, Chapter 12, verses 50-53.) Many of them contain various *upásanás* or meditations, for steadying the mind and qualifying it for the reception of the highest truth. All of them claim to be of divine origin, for we find the Brihad A'ranyaka speaking of the Vedas and the *Upanishads* as "the breathing of the Great Being" (Chapter II, Bráhmana 4, verse 10), while Sankara and his predecessor, Vyasa, declare "Brahman to be the cause of the Sastra." (Sutra 2, Chapter 1, páda 1 of the Brahma Sutras.) The Supreme Being absorbs the Vedas at the end of a Kalpa (cycle of creation), and reveals them to Brahma and others at the commencement of the next Kalpa, and that though for ordinary mortals the course of practical existence is cut off at the end of each Kalpa, it is not so, for certain beings who, by their superior knowledge and power, assume the same form and power in different cycles, and are distinguished by the possession of the same light. For such beings dissolution and creation of the world are like sleep and awakening from sleep, and therefore the same things with the same names appear to them in each Kalpa." (Commentaries on Brahma Sutras I, III, 30.) But whether this argument be accepted or not, there can be no doubt that the ultimate truths taught in the Upanishads are eternal and all science or philosophy, ancient or modern, though it may explain, cannot

add to them. Vyása, the author of the Mahábhárata, and the compiler of the Vedas, is not the author of the Upanishads, though he may have arranged them in their present shape. All therefore that can be said as to their authorship is that they represent the teachings of a long line of teachers, handed down verbally from teacher to pupil, and that even the Rishis between whom the dialogues mentioned in them were held, were not the authors but the enunciators of the doctrines embodied in them.

Their date, authority and subject-matter.

For the same reason it is also impossible to define the date of any of the above Upanishads. The theory which assigned 800 to 1,000 B.C. to the Mantra, and 600 B.C. to the Bráhmana and the A'ranyaka portion of the Vedas has now been controverted, and Mr. B G. Tilak, author of the Orion, ascribes from 5,000 to 3,000 B.C. to the Mantra portion, and 1,400 to 500 B.C. to the pre-Buddhist period which would certainly carry the Bráhmana and the A'ranyaka portion much earlier than 600 B.C. It may be, that some of the larger Upanishads, like the Chandogya and the Brihad A'ranyaka, were collected in their present form at much later dates, and the mention of the Sankhya and the Yoga doctrines in others, such as the Swetáswetara, may place them at even more recent periods; but the main doctrines of the Upanishads have been prevalent in India from very ancient times. Beyond this it is unsafe to go, in the face of difference of opinion regarding everything connected with Hindu chronology, and leaving this question for persons of wider research to solve, we shall pass on to indicate briefly the other matters connected with these treatises.

Even in ancient India persons seem not to have been wanting who denied the authority of the Upanishads, for we find a Sutra of Jaimini, the author of the Purva Mimánsá, to the effect that "as the purport of the Veda is action, those passages whose purport is not action are purportless." (Jaimini Sutras 1, 2, 1.) The argument was that the Upanishads which purport to give information about an existing entity like Brahman, were either purportless or were subordinate to those texts of the Veda which dealt with sacrificial action. The reply of Vyása and his commentator Sankara, in the Brahma Sutras, was that the Veda has a meaning in so far only as it conduces to the highest end of man, *viz.*, freedom from the Sansara and unity with Brahman, and that such passages of it

as give information about existing entities like Brahman, and point out the means for its attainment, instead of being purportless, serve the highest end of man. This opinion, which is supported by the Mahábhárata, every modern reader of the Upanishads shall very likely share in, for, while to him the sacrificial portion of the Veda may have only an antiquarian or historical interest, the philosophical portion has a much deeper and more vital one, in pointing out to him the road travelled by persons who were most earnest seekers after truth and who have left for him their experiences of the road. Hidden within much allegory and fanciful description and play upon words or crude or primitive ideas of physics, etc., and in spite of all faults of metre and grammar, and peculiarity of language, the Upanishads record the views of men who were deeply in earnest in finding out a solution to some of the most cardinal problems of existence, and who have solved them in a manner which has left little for future generations to add or alter.

The goal of the *rishis*, whatever be the interval of time and space at which they were uttering or discussing the truths embodied in the Upanishads, was one and one only, *viz.*, how to attain unity both in nature and in man, and in spite of many digressions and subordinate or inferior meditations included under the name of *apará vidyá*, they never lost sight of their ultimate aim, *viz.*, to demonstrate the presence of the infinite in the finite, and of the self in man being no other but the highest self. *Tat twam asi* (Thou art that), I am Brahman (aham Brahmásmi). This *átman* (self) is Brahman (ayam atina Brahma), Brahman is thought (Pragyanam Brahma), Truth, Intelligence, and Infinity are Brahman (Satyam Gyanamanantam Brahma). These great sayings Mahá vakyas of the Upanishads embody the highest truths given for man to know. There is a certain want of system in some of these treatises, and many a passage now and then baffles the ingenuity of the commentators to explain in a reasonable manner. But as to their ultimate object there cannot be the slightest doubt. This was to start from a system of Apará (lower) Vidya (knowledge), in which Brahman was declared to be the Omniscient, Omnipotent, and All-Pervading Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe, as the Giver of the fruit of action, as the Internal ruler of all, and to attain to the absolute or Pará Brahman, which was declared

to be without any attributes whatever, transcending speech and mind, and described as "*neti*," "*neti*," "not this," "not this," and comprehended and realized only in silence. From many of their passages arise the deepest emotions and the mind is always elevated by their perusal. They are the final authority for all disputed doctrines of the Vedánta philosophy, and are appealed to by philosophers who hold such divergent views as Sankara, the apostle of absolute Adwaitism, Rámánuja, the teacher of Adwaitism with a qualification, and Mádhava, the apostle of Dwaitism (duality). Each of these, as well as the followers of the Sánkhya and the Yoga systems of Indian philosophy, finds texts in them to support his views, and in some cases they can do so without straining the meaning. But it is absolute unity which alone finds the most support from these treatises.

The Sutras.

The Sutras come next. They are short aphorisms, compiled to serve as aids to memory in following the teacher's explanations. Each of the Veda has a Sutra literature of its own. To the Rig-Veda belong the Sankhayana and the A'swalayana, to the Samveda the Látyayna and the Dráhyayana, to the Sukla Yajur-Veda the Kátyáyana, to the Krishna Yajur-Veda the A'pastambha, the Hiranykeshni, the Baudhayana and the Bharadwaja Satras, connected with the Maitrayani Sanhita is the Manava Srauta Sutra upon which is based the present Manu Smriti. To the Atharva Veda no particular system of Sutras can be traced. These are, however, the Srauta Sutras. Besides these we have the Grihya and the Dharma Sutras connected with the observances of daily life and the entire course of duty. The most important of these are the Gobhila, the Paraskara, and the A'pastamba. They are extremely interesting as showing the groundwork of the Aryan society of those days, and that in spite of so many changes our due social fabric is much the same as before. They deal with the various sanskáras or sacraments of the Hindus, both ordinary and otherwise. Among the Sutras those best known are the A'pastamba, Gautama and Vashishtha. The treatise of Sankha and Likhita deals with the administration of justice. They are not the work of an idle priesthood, but of a class of people who systematized the rules of social and religious polity in a manner unknown in any other country in the world and but for their labours in reducing the vast

mass of religious literature to a system which could be preserved in memory, their work would have long perished in the many revolutions through which the country has passed.

Not only the Vedas have a Sutra literature of their own, but we have also in grammar the well-known Sutras of Panini, known as the Ashtadhyayi; in philosophy the Nyaya Sutras of Gautama, the Vaisheshika Sutras of Kanada, the Sankhya Sutras ascribed to Kapila, the Purva Mimansa Sutras of Jaimini and the Uttara-mimansa Sutras (known as the Brahma Sutras) of Vyasa. Each of these has one or more recognized commentators and a number of others who have succeeded them. The Sutras of Panini, Gautama, Kapila, and Vyasa are largely read even now-a-days, and Panini's "Ashtadhyayi" is committed to memory by every one who aspires to know anything of Sanskrit grammar. The art of writing, though known, was not, as already stated, popular in India, and teachers, in giving their explanations to pupils, gave them sentences or bits of sentences to be committed to memory to recall their expositions. In fact, a Sutra cannot be too concise. It is often a word, or a number of words, with the subject or the predicate of the sentence left out. For instance, we have in Brahma Sutras "a thato Brahma Jigyasa, Janmadyasyayatah." ("Then, therefore, inquiry into Brahman. From him is the birth, etc , of this ") These are intelligible enough, but we have others like, "And like a cloth" (Patvachcha) The meaning is, that just as a piece of a very fine cloth when immersed in water is not seen, though it is there, even so is the world when abiding its causal condition in Brahma, though not visible, is yet there. In former times when books were the property of the few, whole commentaries were committed to memory, and what we now have of the Sutras and their commentaries, is less from written than from oral record.

The Smritis.

Then follow the Smritis. The word *Smriti* means the remembrance of the meaning of the Vedas by the rishis, and, secondarily, the treatise recording their recollections. The Smritis are Manu, Atri, Vishnu, Harita, Yagyvalkya, Angira, Yama, Apastamba, Samvarta, Kaytyayan, Vrishapati, Prasara, Vyasa, Sankha, Likhita, Daksha, Gautama, Satatapa and Vashishta. The most important of these are Manu and Yagyavalkya. Manu, as now available, is apparently founded on the Manava Dharma Sutras. Yagyavalkya

is the basis of the well-known Mitakshará. The subjects treated of by the Smriti writers comprise the whole course of social, domestic and religious duties, and Manu stands unsurpassed, not only in Indian, but in the literature of the world, for some of his rules regarding individual conduct and social duties. We shall quote from the Smritis largely in the sequel. Here we shall only give Manu's conception of the aim of life. "Two kinds of duties are prescribed by the Vedas, those relating to worldly prosperity and those relating to release from the world. By following the former one attains to equality with the gods, but by following the latter he attains to that which is beyond the five elements. He who sees the self in all beings, and all beings in the self, such a one who sacrifices all unto self, obtains his own kingdom. Let one devote himself to the acquirement of knowledge of the self and attainment of tranquillity after relinquishing every other duty. This is the fruition of one's birth in this world, especially of one who is born as a Dwija and a Brahman. Having attained to it, the twice-born attains all, not otherwise." (Chapter 12, verses 88 to 93.)

There are some who think that the picture given by Manu is of an ideal, and not an actual state of society in India But even if it were so, it sets before us a very lofty and pure ideal, and one which we ought steadily to keep before us. Both from the secular as well as the religious standpoint, there are but few rules of Manu which will not serve useful guides in most occasions of the daily life of the Hindus. His rules of jurisprudence or of kingly duties may not be applicable to the India of the twentieth century. But his rules of life are as applicable to the Hindus of to-day as to those of the time when his institutes were promulgated, and the Hindus will at once find themselves rising higher in the scale of even modern civilized nations, were they to attempt to make some approach to the ancient lawgivers' ideals regarding the preservation of their manhood, honouring of women, regulation of charity and to their regard for truth and duty. Manu does not teach blind adherence to authority in matters of religion. Reason rightly directed, is held up by him to be as much a guide in determining a course of conduct as revelation. But he is opposed to scepticism and irreligiousness. "The vedas, the smritis, practices of the wise, and what appears good to one's own conscience—these four are the indications of dharma according to the wise."

This is the dictum of Manu. Let India follow that. That dicta of Yagyavalkya, Parasara, and others are similar. If they differ, they do so in details of social or domestic life, but not in the goal of life. For instance, in th Parasara Smriti we have the much-disputed text of sanctioning the marriage of girls at 8, 9, or 10, and in all cases before they attain puberty, side by side with one permitting the re-marriage of widows (not found in Manu). But the goal of Parasara is not different from that of Manu. Most of these smritis seem to have been compiled from earlier dharma and grihya sutras by authors who have probably concealed their identity under those of the authors of the Sutras. But it is unsafe even to say so much, or to give anything definite as to the date of their compilation.

European thinkers say that Manu's institutes, as now available, were compiled in the second century A. D. But few native thinkers will accept this. The Mahábhárata embodies the doctrines that seem to be based upon the same teachings as Manu. But which of the two is earlier is uncertain.

The Itihasas (The Rámáyana).

After the Smritis come the Itihasas or the epics which, unlike the epics of other nations, are, in India, looked upon as authorities in matters of religion. Of these the Rámáyana and the Mahábhárata are the most popular. The former does not contain rules of morality or religion, but the life of each of its chief characters is itself a rule of conduct for all who care to profit by it. Rama, as described by Valmiki, is a perfect man physically, intellectually and morally. Truth and duty are his watch-words. Nothing ever induces him to depart from his ideals. Sita is a type of perfect womanhood. Lakshmana and Bharata of brotherly devotion, and Hanuman of the duty which a servant owes to a master. Valmiki describes his heroes as they are, and the picture he has presented is one of great beauty and grandeur, at least for the Hindus. Rama is as happy when living in Ayodhya in the midst of kingly prosperity as in the forest with Sita and Lakshmana by his side. He does not feel the slightest pang in giving up his claim to the heir-apparentship in favour of his brother Bharata. "I am not," says he, to his step-mother, "desirous of wealth, nor do I care to live in the world. Know me to be, like the rishis, devoted to the path of pure duty." And the poet, in describing the state of his mind in giving up his claim,

says : " The loss of kingly prosperity does not disturb him, like the moon, which does not lose its beauty even when it is on the wane. It was meet that he did not leave his usual cheerfulness of temper, just as the autumnal moon its splendour." Lakshmana out of love for Rama urges him to disregard his promise to his father, but the hero tells him that to him life in the forest is as agreeable as ruling a kingdom. And what can be sweeter than the picture of Sita passionately appealing to Rama to let her accompany him to the forest. " Devoted to thee, distressed, and considering pleasure and pain equal, thou shouldst take me with thee, the companion of thy pains and pleasures." And how firmly does she preserve her devotion to Rama in the midst of the allurements offered to her by the king of Lanka, and how indignantly she repels his advances! Bharata is also as great in his devotion to Rama as Lakshmana. He not only renounces his proffered heir-apparentship, but tries to induce Rama to return, and when told by the latter that he shall not depart from the vow he has taken, offers to rule the kingdom in his name during the period of exile. One of the ministers, who appeals to Rama through worldly argument, meets with a rebuff in the shape of a most powerful discourse on truth and duty. " Truth, duty, exertion, charity, mildness of speech, worship of the gods and the twice-born and the guests," says Rama, " constitute, according to the wise, the path of heaven. The wise live in the world, devoted to duty, in the company of the good, making gifts to others as the chief object of their lives, injuring none, pure in conduct and ever worshipped by the good." And Hanuman, what a figure of courage and wisdom have we in this non-Aryan hero! He is as great in war as in council. Undaunted he enters Ravana's kingdom, openly rebukes him for his meanness in carrying off Sita. Had it not been for his boldness in crossing the sea, Rama would not have heard of Sita, and the course of the Rámáyana would have been otherwise. Ravana, Indrajit and Kumbhakarna all stand out as examples of indomitable courage and force of character, which, because it was directed more towards personal gratification than the protection of virtue, brought upon Ravana the ruin of his kingdom and his family.

The poem consists of about 24,000 slokas, mostly in the Anustup metre which Valmiki for the time popularized in India. It comprises seven books, the last of which, the Uttara

Kanda is, however, apparently an interpolation, for the poem concludes with a benediction at the end of the sixth canto.

The question of the date of the Rámáyana which puzzles European thinkers does not puzzle the Indian reader. The orthodox belief is that Rama flourished in the Treta Yuga described above. European writers make out the kernel of the poem to have been composed about 500 B.C., and the later additions to be as late as 200 B.C., and even later It is also thought that the Rámáyana is merely an allegory representing the Aryan invasion of the south or the spread of Aryan culture in Ceylon. The internal evidence furnished by the poem is, however, very clear, and shows that Rama, Sita, Lakshman, Ravana, Hanuman, Sugriva and others were all historical personages ; that Rama, with the aid of Sugriva and his adherents, invaded Lanka, killed Ravana and brought back Sita, but that he left no mark of Aryan civilization either in Lanka or in Sugriva's kingdom. The poem also shows that Ravana ruled a kingdom as highly civilized as any in the India of those days, and that he was even a more powerful monarch than any Indian king of his time. As Hanuman told him, "had it not been for his iniquitous proceeding in carrying off the wife of Rama, he would have long enjoyed his kingdom." The theory that Sita represents the furrow, Rama, Indra and Ravana Vritra of Vedic mythology, Hanuman the Maruts and the abduction of Sita, the stealing of cows by Indra, is also a little far-fetched, and owes its origin to the reluctance of European writers to give the Hindus credit for any history. Valmiki deals with Rama's adventures as with those of a contemporary hero, and it would be too much to conclude that they are all a creation of his imagination. But all these theories, however attractive to a European reader, are not so to an Indian who loves and follows Rama and Sita, repeats their names in life and in death all the same, caring little whether they may, or may not, have been historical personages in the European sense of the term.

The Mahabharata.

The other great epic of India is the Mahábhárata, which may be said to be one of the greatest books of the world. We have in it not only a perfect picture of the India of those days, but also a great teacher of duty to all, the highest and the lowest, in a manner suited to the capacity of each. Ethics, religion and philo-

sophy are here not only inculcated by abstract rules, but by pictures of men and women who carried them out in life, while throughout the whole runs the great lesson of *dharma* (duty), *viz.*, not to do to others what is not good for one's own self; and that wealth and pleasure, unless subordinated to *dharma*, lead to ruin. The poem further illustrates the great moral law that as soon as a nation falls off from righteousness, it is hurled into destruction, and that even the highest are not exempt from the operation of this law. The life of each of its characters is a study in itself. Yudhishthira is the embodiment of virtue, Arjuna of courage, Bhima of strength, Duryodhana of strong and determined will to enjoy the present, Bhishma of wisdom and bravery, Dhritarastra of blind avarice defeated and bringing repentance at every turn, Draupadi of strength of character and conjugal devotion, while the chief actor in the whole drama is the greatest hero of Indian history—Sri Krishna the politician, statesman, warrior, philosopher and ascetic. He stands out a figure by himself, and the more he is studied from whatever standpoint, the more reverence does he inspire. Each of the episodes of the great epic also embodies a great lesson. The Bhagvad Gita is now well-known in every civilized country of the world. In India it is the book of books both for the anchorite in the forest and for the busy man of the world who has a conception of duty higher than mere personal gratification. The story of Sakuntala illustrates how true-hearted and strong in the courage of their convictions were the women of India in those days. In the fall of Yayati, and his asking one of his sons to give him his youth in order to prolong the period of his enjoyment on earth, we have the picture of man deriving nothing but sorrow from sensual gratification. The story of Nala and Damayanti shows the strength of conjugal devotion in distress of the direst description, while the manner in which Savitri rescues her husband from the clutches of the king of the dead, shows what a faithful wife can do for her husband. Markandeya's adventures in the stomach of Vishnu illustrate how even the wisest are not able to fathom the mystery of creation. The story of the good fowler (Dharma Vyadha) who teaches duty to a Bráhmana and attributes all his spiritual insight to devotion to his aged father and mother, shows that in those days learning was not the exclusive property of the priestly class. The Vidura Niti embodies the instruction given by Vidura to

Dhritarastra, and is still studied as a great book of ethics in India, while the Sanat Sujata Gita teaches the doctrine of the unity of self in the clearest and most forcible manner possible, without any attempt at compromise or adherence to dogma or tradional authority. The Santi and the Anushasana Parvas of the epic form one long treatise on religion, polity, philosophy and ethics, while the Anugita attempts to popularize the teachings of the Bhagvad Gita. The story how Vyasa brings the dead out of the Ganges to meet the living, and how the two hostile factions merge their former grudges and meet as brothers and friends, is intended to illustrate the lesson that for those who aspire to a higher life, forgetfulness of past grudges is the only course. The way in which Krishna, by appealing to his devotion to truth, brings to life the still-born grandson of Arjuna, shows that all the charges of cunning which used to be levelled against him were false. In Yudhishthira refusing to go to heaven unaccompanied with his dog and his brothers and wife, we have the picture of love for those who have followed us in life. Krishna's seeing iniquity increasing among his kinsmen and letting them perish, furnishes a strong illustration of the moral law that the highest and best cannot avert the consequences of evil, which must be suffered by its doer sooner or later. One thing, however, that strikes the reader most is that though describing great events, Vyasa never forgets that he is describing the history of souls in their passage through the world, the shackles that bend them and the knowledge which cuts these shackles as under.

No doubt we meet in places ideas which may seem crude and fantastic to modern readers, as well as repeated attempts to subordinate all to the claims of the priestly class. Doctrines of the Saiva and the Vaishnava cults have also been interpolated in the Santi Parva to support them from the authority of the *Mahábhárata*. Accounts of battles have been prolonged in a manner which shows that Vyasa could not have written them in the manner they are now presented to us. The work at present consists of more than 100,000 slokas, but originally it contained only 24,000. In the Adi Parva we are told that before the Upákhyánas were added, this was the number. We are further told that 8,800 slokas of the book are "known to me and Suka, but whether Sanjaya knows them or not is doubtful." This would seem to show that the ground-

work of the poem was these 8,800 slokas. There are thus three layers in this wonderful book : (1) 8,800 slokas which according to the Mahábhárata itself are very abstruse and "closely knit," (2) 24,000 slokas which contain the main story without the episodes, and (3) 00,000 slokas which form the complete work. When these interpolations were made, cannot be known. The Mahábhárata is mentioned in the Aswalayana Gribya Sutras. It mentions Vishnu and Siva as the chief gods, and though it also deals with every other cult then prevalent in India, the aim of its teachings is always pure and lofty. "Even the most intelligent by cherishing wealth and wives can never make these their own, nor are these possessions lasting." (Adi Parva, Chapter 2.) Thousands of fathers and mothers, hundreds of sons and wives I have met with and shall meet with in the Sansára They come and go. Thousands of occasions of joy and hundreds of sorrow occur every day to the fool, but not to the wise. I cry with uplifted arms, but no one hears me. From virtue come wealth and pleasure, why not follow it ?" These teachings are repeated in several places, and may be said to be the cherished doctrines of the author of the poem. But it requires discrimination in the reader to separate the original from the more modern portion of the book. The Pandits, though they recite it to large assemblies of Hindus who laugh or weep as the occasion demands, never attempt to do so. On the other hand, an idea prevails in native circles that the book can never be completely read and that it has to be stopped on account of some untoward thing, or a fight or quarrel taking place in the house where it is recited These are mere superstitions due to the heaviness of the task of reading such a vast book. Whoever, however, determines to read it through cannot but rise from its perusal a better man as well as feel its good and elevating influence on the whole course of his life. The field of Kurukhshetra which is called the *dharma khsetra* (the field of virtue) in the Gita, is still a very sacred place for the Hindus, and every eclipse of the sun brings to its sacred lake hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all parts of India, the popular belief being that the war was concluded during a solar eclipse. The place still retains much of the primitive simplicity, and as one treads its jungles he is reminded of the India of the past, when cities and towns were few and far between, and people lived a simper and in many respects a better and more truthful life than now.

There is much controversy as to the date of the Mahábhárata. The ordinary Hindu is content with being told that the war took place at the end of the Dwâpara Yuga, and that its close marked the commencement of the present Kali Yuga. Western scholars, like Professor Macdonnel, on the other hand, think that the kernel of the poem existed in the tenth century B.C., that its original form came into existence in the fifth century, and that it assumed its present shape at the beginning of the Christian era. The opinion of modern native scholars is that the war took place in the fifteenth or the sixteenth century B.C., while Mr. Gopal Aiyar in his "Chronology of Ancient India" ascribes to it the 14th to 31st October, 1194 B.C., after which the Kali Yuga commenced.

The Puranas.

The last great authorities in matters of religion are the Puranas which form the basis of popular Hinduism of the present day. All these treatises are supposed to be the work of Vyasa, the compiler of the Vedas, the Mahábhárata and the Brahm Sutras, and orthodox Hinduism is shocked at being told that they are the work of sectarian writers promulgated at various intervals of time to support sectarian views. The word *Purana*, as it occurs in the Upanishads and the Mahábhárata, means legends of kings and rishis like those of Harishchandra, Pururava, etc. According to the Vishnu Purana, a Purana ought to contain " accounts of the creation of the universe, its successive generations, genealogies of patriarchs and kings, the Manwantaras and the royal dynasties." There are eighteen Puranas : the Brahma, Padama, Vaishnava, Saiva, Bhagvata, Naradiya, Markandeya, Agneya, Bhavishyata, Brahma Vaivarta, Lainga, Váráhá, Skanda, Vamana, Kaurma, Matsya, Garuda and Brahmánda. The Purana, which was recited by Brahmá, is called the Brahma Purana, Vishnu Purana is so called because it treats of the exploits of Vishnu, and Padma, because it deals with the events of the Padma Kalpa. The Siva Purana treats of the exploits of Siva, and the Bhagvati Purana of Bhagvati, Narada, Markandeya, and Agni are the authors of the Puranas that go after their names. The same is the case with the others. The goal of all these treatises is, however, the same Adwaitism as that of the Upanishads For instance, we are told in the Vishnu Purana : " All that is here, is one. It is Achyuta (Vishnu). Nothing else but He is. That am I. That art thou. That is all this. Do thou relinquish this illusion of duality.

"All this world of 'I' and 'mine' is due to the action of Nescience. In truth Vasdso the inner self of all alone exists." The Vishnu is the oldest and best of all the Puranas. It is not so very encyclopædic in character as some of the others which attempt, though very imperfectly, to deal not only with religion and philosophy, but also with medicine, astronomy, etc., are. Some of these Puranas like the Bhagwata appear to have been written after the advent of the Mahomedan rule. But most of them reproduce traditions that had long been current in India, though in a much altered form. The five principal gods of the Puranas—Siva, Surya, Vishnu, Sakti, and Ganesha are represented by the followers of each as paramount deities and all others as subordinate to them. But the opinion of standard writers, like Nilkantha, the commentator of the Mahábhárata, is that each of these Puranas deals with one aspect of Brahm and that their object is not to lower one deity at the expense of another, but to prepare one of a lower stage of religious or philosophic development for the Adwaita, the goal of all. This explanation is very fair, and is supported by the Puranas themselves. It is impossible to give any idea of the contents of these enormous treatises which occupy no less than 400,000 verses, the Padma alone containing 55,000. They are the work of men who recast ancient mythologies and incorporated in them modern cults. There is much in them which is very crude and fantastical, but their doctrines are not always so absurd as is generally supposed. Discrimination in reading these treatises and separating the truth from dogma is, however, always necessary. The most popular are the Vishnu and the Bhagvata Puranas. The latter is the giver of bread to many a Pandit of these times. It consists of 18,000 verses containing good poetry and is a work of great literary merit, but has no value as a history. The others are not generally read.

The Tantras.

The last portion of our religious literature is the Tantras. A Tantra is supposed to treat of creation and its subsequent generation, determination of the nature of a mantra, installation of gods, description of sacred places, the duties of various modes of life, the establishment of Brahmins, the various elemental substances, rules regarding charms, the creation of gods, trees, heavenly bodies, ancient legends, discourse upon treasures, fasts, purity and impu-

rity, hells, nature of men and women, kingly duties, rules for making gifts and the duties of each Yuga, worldly affairs, the knowledge of the self, etc The Tantras are, moreover, divided into Yamalas, Agama and Tantras. But all treat of the above more or less. The Mahanirvana, which is the best, contains some very good prayers. The others cannot be said to represent a healthy state of the national mind, nor do they belong to an age when truth was the essence of religion.

Vernacular literature.

Now-a-days, however, it is not Sanskrit but the vast mass of religious literature in the vernaculars of each Province of India has done largely towards moulding the character of the people. The Rámáyana of Tulsi Dass, who flourished in the seventeenth century, exercises a more powerful influence on the ordinary Hindu man or woman of Upper India than the Rámáyana of Valmiki. The songs of Surdass, who lived at the court of Akbar, are more largely sung in Northern Hindustan than the hymns of the Vedas. The Granth Sahib of Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, and the sayings of Kabir, are more largely quoted by ascetics and others in the Punjab than those of the Upanishads. In Bombay, Tukaram and Namdeo are more popular than Sankara, while in Bengal Chaitanya exercises a greater influence than any of the heroes or the gods of ancient times Most of this literature is pure and unsectarian, and is a protest against the dogmatism of the priestly class and trammels of caste.

It is, however, thought by many that our literature is more transcendental than practical, that we did not look the facts of life straight in the face, that we concern ourselves with speculation than with affairs of every-day life, and that devoted to our traditions, as we are, we cannot hope to compete with the nations of the west. Light, it is said, comes from the east, but till the light of the west has driven out much of what has obscured the light of the east, the India of to-day cannot rise, nor can the hopes and beliefs and aspirations of the people be made loftier. The east must now adjust itself to its new environments and adapt its religious literature to its present requirements, by making selections of what is suited to present needs and what is not. There is much but not the whole truth in this. Our ancient Indian literature is a vast sea full of

both pearls and shells, and the former must be dived and brought out, and the latter thrown aside. Ancient India had arts and sciences suited to its needs. Not only in poetry, drama, fiction, law, philosophy, but also in astronomy, medicine, chemistry, mathematics and physical science, our people made progress which challenges the admiration of western scientists. The researches in Hindu Chemistry made by Professor Roy show that in that branch of science the Hindus were never inferior to any nation of antiquity. The medical treatises of Charaka, Susruta and Vagbhata have extorted admiration from European doctors. Astronomy was long the fôrte of the Hindus. The science of numbers in the west owes its origin to India. In architecture, the caves and temples of Bhuvaneshwar and other places show the progress made by Indians in this direction. The iron pillar at Qutab, near Delhi built in the time of Pirthi-raj, was the work of men who did without machinery what modern iron foundries would scarcely be able to do with machinery. The descriptions of courts and camps of kings, the accounts of houses, streets and markets, and the trade of the country found in our epic and dramatic literature and the writings of Greek and Chinese travellers, show what the Hindus were capable of The inner world was, however, to them more important than the outer world, and yet even in the latter by observation alone they did things which have yet to be done by the applied sciences of modern times. Had it not been for the depressing influence of repeated foreign invasion and foreign supremacy, the Hindus would not have been left so weak in the domain of science, nor so exclusively introspective as they subsequently came to be. The time has now come for taking a more correct view of our literature, and accepting only that portion of it as is authoritative and deserves to be accepted in the light of reason. The problem to be faced is the *realization* of a single united Indian nationality amidst complexity, the growth of ages, and for that the ideal of the rishis, *viz.*, unity amidst diversity, cannot be too steadily kept in view.

II.—SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

संगच्छध्वं संवद्ध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानतां

Unite, consult together. Let your minds think the same thoughts.

(Rig Veda)

I.—CASTE.

Its universal character.—The first great feature of Hindu society, and one which strikes an outside observer most forcibly, is its rigid division into castes, precluding the members of a lower from rising higher in the social scale, and thus standing in the way of the progress of the individual and formation of nationality. Caste in some form or other is the normal condition of all society everywhere, and every community, no matter what its religous or social development may be, requires for its well-being teachers, rulers, producers of wealth, and servants and labourers Even in the most democratic countries of the west, such divisions of society have always been, and shall always be found, and the well-being of society requires that the whole of these functions be discharged on a definite and a well-organized plan But while in other countries accession from one class to another is possible, and depends largely upon personal merit, in most cases upon the possession of wealth ; in modern India it is not so, though this was clearly the case in India of the past. In Europe, even though each class tries to exclude all interlopers from its ranks in the beginning, yet it is possible to get an admission into a class above one's own, if one is qualified for it. It was also the same in ancient India. While, therefore, the usual broad distinctions of society mentioned above ought to remain, the question for consideration is, whether the rigidity of the present system of caste in India ought not to be so relaxed as to remove the barrier which it places in the way of the progress of the Indian people.

But is caste in modern India the division of society according to occupation or locality or both, or do other elements also enter into its composition? It is defined by Mr. Risley, the Census Commissioner, as "a collection of families or groups of families, bearing a

common name which usually denotes or is associated with, a common occupation, claiming common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, or professing to follow the same professional calling and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community. A caste is invariably endogamous in the sense that a member of the larger circle denoted by the common name may not marry outside that circle. But within the circle there are usually a number of smaller circles, each of which is also endogamous" (Census Report, page 517.) This is a fairly accurate definition of caste as it now exists, though it does not apply to the division of society found in India of the past. There, they were not endogamous nor so isolated as to form separate and distinct communities, each having nothing in common with the other

In the *gramas* of the five Aryan people (*panch janah*) of the Vedas there were nobles, leaders and kings (rájanya), counsellors, priests, prophets and judges, working men, builders of roads and wielders of ploughs and rearers of cattle, but no division of caste. It is only in the Purusha Sukta (Rig Veda, book X, hymn 90) that we meet for the first time "the Bráhmana proceeding from the mouth of the Purusha, the Rájanya from both his arms, the Vaisya from both his thighs, and the Sudra from his feet." (Verse 12.) But this represents a symbolical and not an actual creation from Purusha the Primeval Being, and the meaning, of course, is that the Bráhmana who had the privilege of addressing the gods in prayer was the mouth of the Deity, the Kshatriya who had the duty of wielding the sword and protecting the people represented his arms, the Vaisya who attended to trade and agriculture, his thighs, and the Sudra who laboured and toiled for the general body of the Aryans, his feet. It would be an insult to the intelligence of those Aryans who sang: "We have all various thoughts and plans and diverse are the ways of man; the Bráhmana seeks the worshipper, the carpenter his ripe and seasoned wood, the physician the sick. I am a bard, my father is a physician, my mother lays corn upon the stone; striving for wealth, we follow our desires with varied plans like cows" (Rig Veda IX., 112-1, 2 and 3), - to represent the great Purusha sacrifice to be an actual creation of the universe. References to the five tribes of the Aryans, the Turvasas, the Anus, the Druhuyus, the Yadus and

the Purus, who were subsequently represented as produced from the sage Vashistha's cow, to aid him in his fight with Vishwamitra, are met with in the Rig Veda, but the words *panch janah* and *panch kshiti* mean the five people and not the four castes and the Nisbádas, as some writers fancy them to be. It is only as we go on that references to caste become more explicit. For instance, in the Satpatha Bráhmana (II-1-4-II) we read "uttering 'Bhu' Prájapatí created the Bráhmana, uttering 'Bhuvah,' He created the Kshatra, uttering 'Swah,' He created the Vaisya. All this world is so much as Bráhmana, Kshatra and Vis" There is here no mention of the Sudras, who are, however, declared in the Taitreya Bráhmana to have sprung from the Asuras or from "non-existence." In the Brihad Áranyaka Upanishad (I, 4, 9 to 14) we find the Bráhmana to be "one who like Brahm itself knows only his self, and worships no other deity. The Kshatriya represents power (law) and dharma both among gods and men, the Vaisya the lower classes of gods and the people (vis) among men, and the Sudra (varna) the earth, the nourisher."

The word generally used both in ancient as well as in modern writings is *varna* (color) not caste (*jati*), thus showing that the Aryans who called themselves the "white friends of Indra," and described their enemies the Dasyus, the aborigines, as the "flat-nosed, the black-skinned Dasyus," were fairer in complexion than the latter, and that by a natural transition the word "Dasyu" became Dâsa, the modern appellation of slave in India, and was made to apply to all Sudras. The only division of castes, properly so called, known in the Vedic times, was therefore the division between the white-skinned Aryans and the dark-skinned aborigines of the land. In other lands, and even in modern times, the aborigines have been exterminated to make room for the white settlers. The ancient Aryans were more humane and allowed the aborigines to exist in their communities as an inferior caste or color (*varna*) under the name of Dâsa or Dasyu.

Caste in the Smriti and the Epic Periods.—It is in the Institutes of Manu and later writers that caste was recognized to be one of the chief, perhaps the chief institution, of Aryan society, though even the Institutes of Manu and other Smriti writers do not afford any trace of what it has come to be in modern times. Progress was then recognized to be the law of society, and accession from

one caste to another could not have been denied by these sages in the way it now is. "The duties in the Krita Yuga are differen from those of the Treta Yuga, those of the Treta from those of the Dwâpara, and those of the Kali from those of the Dwâpara. In the Krita tapas (ascetism) was the chief duty; in the Treta it was knowledge; in the Dwâpara it was sacrifice; and in the Kali they say charity is the only one duty. But, for the protection of all this creation, the Great Effulgent assigned to those who were created from his mouth, arms, thighs and feet, various duties. He assigned to the Bráhmana the duty of imparting and receiving instruction, performing and officiating at sacrifices, giving and receiving gifts. To the Kshatriya he assigned the duty of protecting people, making gifts, performing sacrifices, reading the scriptures and non-attachment to objects of the senses. To the Vaisya he assigned the duty of rearing cattle, making gifts and sacrifices, studying the scriptures, trading by sea and receiving and lending money on interest, and the profession of agriculture. To the Sudra he assigned only one duty, *viz.*, to serve the other three classes without jealousy. The Bráhmana is the lord of all as he was produced from the principal member of the body of the Creator, as he is the oldest of all created beings, and as he is the preserver of the Veda" (Manu I-85 to 91 and 93.)

The language of Manu is thus as symbolical as that of the Vedas, and points to the division of work in Aryan society as answering to its creation from the mouth and other parts of the body of Prájapatí. Later Smriti writers like Vasishtha and Parásara, as well as the authors of the Grihya Sutras, are also as liberal. Vasishtha declares that, "No one is a Bráhmana without knowing the Rig Veda for, as said in the Sloka, a twice-born who without reading the Veda devotes himself to something else, becomes a Sudra in this very life. A person does not become a Sudra merely by trade or lending money on interest or engaging as a physician. No assembly can be said to be an assembly of Bráhmans, though thousands of persons who live upon the claims of birth alone and are ignorant of their duties as well as of the Vedas, are assembled there. The four orders are constituted by their nature and their Sanskáras, and the meaning of the passage that He, Prájapatí, created the Bráhmana "from the Gáyatri metre, the Rájanya from the Trishtubha, and the Vaisya from the

Jágatí, is that these various classes of persons are purified by Sanskáras performed according to these metres." (Vashishtha Smriti, Chapters 2 and 3.) In the Apastamba Sutras we read of a person of a lower order rising into a higher one for which he may be qualified by the performance of Dharma, and of a person of a higher order descending into a lower one by acting otherwise. Manu's dictum of a Sudra becoming a Bráhmana and a Bráhmana a Sudra, a Kshatriya or a Vaisya, was thus more or less recognized by later writers also. In the Mahábhárata, too, we find the same, for we are told: "There is really no distinction between the four orders. The whole world at first consisted of Bráhmanas. Created equally by Bráhma men have, in consequence of their acts, become distributed into different orders. They who became fond of indulging their desires and were addicted to pleasure and were of a severe and wrathful disposition, endowed with courage and unmindful of piety and worship . . . . those Bráhmans possessing the attributes of Rajas (passion) became Kshatriyas. Those Bráhmans, again, who, without attending to the duties laid down for them, became possessed of the attributes of goodness (Satva) and passion, and took to the practice of rearing of cattle and agriculture, became Vaisyas. Those Bráhmans, again, who became fond of untruth and injuring others and engaged in impure acts and fallen from purity of behaviour, added to the attribute of darkness (Tamas), became Sudras. Separated by occupation Bráhmanas became members of the other three orders. All the four orders have therefore the right of performing all pious acts and sacrifices. Even thus were the four orders created equally by Brahmá, who ordained for all of them the observances disclosed in the words of the Vedas." (Moksha Dharma, Chapter 188.) Krishna also declared in the Bhagvad Gita the fourfold division of caste to have been created according to the distinction of attributes and duties (IV-13), and it is said in another place in the Mahábhárata:—"He in whom are seen truth, charity, forgiveness, good conduct, benevolence, observance of the duties of his order and mercy, is a Bráhmana. Those characteristics that are present in a Bráhmana are not present in a Sudra, nor do those that are seen in a Bráhmana exist in a Sudra, and a Sudra is not a Sudra nor a Bráhmana a Bráhmana except through his characteristics. He in whom are seen these virtues is a Bráhmana, and he should be

termed a Sudra in whom these qualities do not exist (even though he is a Bráhman by birth)." The objection that if Bráhmanhood fdepended upon the possession of certain attributes, the distinction of castes would disappear, was met with by saying that "character is the chief requisite, that so long as he is not initiated in the Vedas, every person is a Sudra, and that whoever conforms to the rules of pure and virtuous conduct is a Bráhmana." (Vana Parva, Chapter 180, verses 21, 25, 26, and 32.)

Claims of birth were, however, now and then asserted in the epic period, and in one place it is said in the Mahábhárata (Anusasana Parva, 29.1) that the "status of a Bráhmana can only be acquired by birth." And Vishwamitra, the Kshatriya King of Kanyakubja, was admitted to the status of a Bráhmana and King Vitahavya, who sought refuge in the asylum of the sage Bhrigu when pursued by Pratardana, the King of Kasi, was made a Bráhmana by the mere word of the rishi. (Anusasana Purva, Chapter 30.) These are typical in showing that birth alone did not determine one's caste in those days. The Bráhmanas did, indeed, assert that whether "cognizant of the Vedas, or ignorant of them, whether pure or impure, Bráhmanas are always to be honoured, they are like fire covered with ashes : just as fire, even if it is in a crematorium, is never impure, even so is a Brahman, whether he is wise or otherwise, always a superior god." (Vana Parva, Chapter 200, verses 88 and 89.) Yet these pretensions were never recognized in practice. On the contrary, it was declared "that the gods know him for a Bráhmana who has cast off anger and passion, who always speaks the truth here, who gratifies his preceptor, who, though himself injured, never returns the injury, who has his senses under control, who is virtuous, pure and devoted to the study of the Vedas, has subdued lust, is endowed with mental energy, is catholic in religion and looks upon all beings as himself." "It is neither birth nor study, nor learning that constitutes Bráhmanhood. It is character which constitues it." (Vana Parva, Chapter 313, verse 108.) And it could not be otherwise with the highly developed intellect and the knowledge of their religious scriptures possessed by the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, and even by some of the Sudras of those times.

Caste in the Puranic and later Times.—It is only in the Puranic and later times, and not completely even then, that birth alone

was declared as determining one's caste. The Vishnu Purana in Book III, Chapter 8, declares that "he who observes the duties of his caste, does not vilify another in his presence or in his absence, and does not speak an untruth, pleases Kesava (God) best," and the general duties of the four castes are declared by it to be "acquisition of wealth for the support of servants, begetting of children upon their wives, kindness towards all, patience, humility, truth, purity, contentment, courtesy, gentleness of speech, friendliness, freedom from envy and avarice." The Sukra Niti, a modern work on polity, also says: "Good and bad conditions in life are due to Karma alone. Actions done in a previous life are called *prarabdha*. Can any one remain without action even for a moment? In this world no one is a Bráhmana, or a Kshatriya, or a Vaisya, or a Sudra, or a Mlechha by birth alone. Such distinctions are due to action and qualifications alone. Can all creatures be Bráhmanas because they were created by Brahmá? The glory of Bráhmanhood cannot be acquired by colour nor from one's father. Those who by their knowledge, actions and meditations are engaged in the worship of the gods, who are of a peaceful disposition, having their senses under control and who are merciful, are Bráhmanas from their attributes. Those who are skilled in protecting the people, are brave, keep their senses under control, are possessed of courage and are capable of controlling the wicked, are Kshatriyas. They who are skilled in sales and purchases, and always live by trade and are devoted to the rearing of cattle and agriculture, are known in the world as Vaishyas. They who are devoted to the service of the twice-born, are of a peaceful disposition, have their senses under control, and who carry ploughs, fuel and grass, are known as Sudras. Those who have relinquished the duties of their orders, are of a cruel disposition, bent upon injuring others, wrathful and killing others, and wanting in discrimination, are Mlechhas." (Sukra Niti I--37 to 44.) The Bráhmana, in short, was a Bráhmana by being the friend of all creatures (Maitro Bráhmana), the Kshatriya, a Kshatriya by protecting the people (Kshatattrayate), the Vaisya, a Vaishya by rearing cattle, and the Sudra, a Sudra by rendering service. Sacrifice of self for the good of others was the key-note of system of the caste, and it is said in the Máhábharata (*Santi Parva*, Chapter 60, verse 54) that there "is nothing in the three

worlds equal to sacrifice," and that "every one should perform it with devotion, with a pure heart, free from malice, and to the best of his ability."

How sentiments like these, which conduced to the progress the Hindus of those times made in the arts of life, came to be disregarded, and when did they give place to ideas like those found in later writings, is an interesting study both for the antiquarian and the patriot in India. All subjects of Indian chronology are, however, involved in great obscurity, and it is not safe to venture upon giving dates of any of the later writings to which the decline of Hinduism, as a religion of truth and healthy action, may be traced. All that can be said is that passages like those found in later writings, have done much to perpetuate the present state of things. Says the Suta Samhita, which is a part of the Skanda Purána: "For all orders the distinction of caste is due to birth and not to millions of Karmas, just as the class to which an animal belongs, is determined by its birth and not otherwise." Chapter 12, verse 51.) Sentiments like these, added to the decline of learning in the laity and its monopoly by the priesthood, led the latter ultimately to declare that in the Kali age there were no Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, and that there were either Bráhmanas or Sudras. (Kalavádyanatayoh-Sthitih) कलावाद्यन्त योः स्थितिः "In the Kali the first and the last only exist."

Caste in Modern India.—We have thus an infinite number of mutually repellant and exclusive groups of the community instead of the four castes of the ancient lawgivers. The Brahmins are not only divided into the Panch Gouras and the Panch Dravidas, according as they live to the north or the south of the Vindhya range, but these are also sub-divided into as many as 1,886 distinct tribes, the Sarswatas of the Punjab alone containing 469. In the last census the superior castes of Brahmins in the United Provinces contained 9 and the inferior 8 sub-divisions. The Rajputs contained about 42 and the Vaishyas 10. These are, however, only the principal sub-divisions amongst those who claim to be and are recognized as Bráhmanas, Kshatriays or Vaisyas. Each of these has its local sub-divisions to an infinite extent, till you come to a few families each claiming to form an exclusive tribe or caste. Below them are a large number of people who claim to be either Bráhmanas, Rajputs or Vaishyas,

but are not so recognized. The sub-divisions of Sudras are even more numerous, and this is not only the case in one province, but all over the country also. The question how such an innumerable variety of castes arose in the country is very difficult to answer. In some cases the names furnish an index to the orgin of a caste and show how functional tribes which were originally separate groups for purposes of a trade or profession, became subsequently crystallized into castes. For instance, among workers in leather the *chamars* are distinct from the *mochis ;* among cowherds the *ahirs* are distinct from the *goalas ;* among gardeners the *koeris* are distinct from the *kachis.* Then again a section of a community which was originally a portion of a caste organized itself on account of its religious beliefs into a separate caste, tracing its origin to a mythical ancestor and claiming equality with or even superiority over the parent tribe. Change of locality also led to the same result, as the names denote. Among Brahmans, for instance, the Kanya-kubja are those who originally came from Canouj, the Maithil those who lived in Mithila, the Goura from the Gour country (Bengal), the Sarwaria from the country around the Saryu river. In the case of some, crossing also led to the formation of separate castes. The offspring of men who married women of higher or lower castes, and the offspring of women who married men of higher and lower castes, could not belong to either the caste of the father or the mother, but had to form a separate caste which became further subdivided by subsequent crossings. It was so even in Manu's time. Then the son of a Brahman from a Vaisya woman was an Ambastha, to whom belonged the art of healing, of a Brahman by a Sudra woman a Nisháda whó lived by killing fish, of a Kshatriva father and Sudra mother an Ugra. On the other hand, the son of a Brahman woman from a Sudra father was a Chandala, and of a Sudra father and a Kshatriya mother an Ayogava. Now-a-days, also, many high-class Hindus who claim to be either Brahmins, Kshatriyas or Vaisyas like the Bhargavas, the Khetris, the Kayasthas were probably castes formed by such crossings. Change of custom also accounts for the formation of new castes. A section of a people discard or adopt a custom which other people follow and are at once regarded as a separate caste. The Jats, who claim to be Rajputs, for instance, practise widow-

marriage, while those who are recognized as Rajputs proper do not. This change of custom is now-a-days also unfortunately dividing most classes of Hindus into those who permit and those who prohibit sea voyages. These and other causes of a like nature account for the present disintegration of Indian society.

Each of these sections refuses to recognize every other section formed out of the parent group as superior or in some cases even equal to it. The supremacy of the Brahmins is universally recognized by other castes. But among themselves there is no order of precedence, and one section of this community would not recognize another. The same is the case with the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas. Both recognize the Brahmans as superior to them, but not those who belong to their own subdivisions. Among Vaisyas the supremacy of the Rajputs is not universally recognized, though of the Brahmans is.

If questions of the relative position of a caste arise, the Pandits are appealed to with varying results. For instance, if Kayasthas claim to be Kshatriyas and the Dhusar Brahmins, the *dicta* of Pandits are now in their favour, and now not. But even when they are, they are not thereby allowed to intermarry or interdine with Kshatriyas or Brahmins. Each caste, sectarian or functional, is a unit, and must remain a unit completely separate from other units. In ancient times kings now and then interfered in settling the social precedence of various castes, and in Bengal, Balal Sen degraded the Suvarnbaniks who claimed to be Vaishyas, and settled the grades of Brahmins. In Mithila the present matrimonial customs of Brahmins are due to the interference of certain kings. But now-a-days caste goes its own way without any inteference from the ruling power. The two tests whether the twice-born will take water and pucca food from the hands of its members, as well as whether Brahmins will act as priests on occasions of births, marriages or deaths, determine its comparative purity or otherwise. They do not, however, do more, and it must observe its own rules of endogamy and commensality. The prohibition or otherwise of widow re-marriage which also once determined the superiority of a caste, is now giving way before reform ideas of modern times, and a caste which allows its widows to re-marry shall soon not be looked down as an inferior caste. The introduction of child-marriage and the observance of *parda*, which at one time used to be considered as

indications of superior caste, are also giving way before modern reforms. And yet exclusiveness is the essence of the whole system. The rule of endogamy is applicable to all the castes of modern India. There are, however, one or two exceptions, for instance, the Vaishyas of Kumaon intermarry with Rajputs, though not with Khus Rajputs or Doms as stated by the Census Superintendent of the North-West Provinces at page 216 of his report.

We have, in short, the spectacle of a society split up into a number of infinitely small divisions, each holding itself entirely aloof from the rest and trying to make its exclusiveness as strong as possible. They are all so completely cut off from each other that there is a current saying among the Saryu Parí Bráhmanas of Northern India, that for nine of these Bráhmanas there would be ten kitchens. Not only is the present system the parent of the disintegration now so common in Indian society, but is also at the root of many of the evils of infanticide, sales of boys and girls for large and fabulous dowers, and the cause of so much misery now met with in India. Their circle of choice being extremely narrow, fathers of girls must either marry them on terms demanded by parents of bridegrooms, or let them go unmarried, and as no Hindu can afford to do the latter, he must either find money for the match, or, anticipating future trouble, must do away with his child's life as in some parts of the country is still done. In other respects, also, the descent from the ideal of the Sastras to the actual of modern India, is sufficient to drive many a reformer to despair. The descendants of those who were enjoined to devote themselves to the study of the Vedas and be the friends of all creatures, are in many parts of the country not only wielders of plough and agriculturists, but are now and then involved in crimes of the most serious character, and every one concerned in the administration of justice will at once bear testimony to the fact that instead of suppression of anger, avoidance of quarrel and possession of self-restraint, the opposite are the tendencies of those who claim to trace their descent from the *rishis* of India. Gifts, study and sacrifice, which, together with the protection of the people, were the chief duties of the Kshatriyas, have given place to wielding of implements of husbandry, ignorance of the very first principles of their religion, idleness, drink and cognate vices. It is only the Vaishya class which may be said to have fairly kept up its traditions.

It has still a large portion of the trade of the country in its hands, and has been the foremost to profit by the present system of government and the advantages offered by it. "Fair in complexion," says Mr. Sherring, "with rather delicate features and a certain refinement depicted upon their countenances, sharp of eye and intelligent of face, and polite of bearing, the Vaishyas must have radically changed since the days when their fathers delved, sowed and reaped. And so great is the change that a heated controversy is going on in the Hindu society, whether the Bengali Banias or merchant-bankers are really of Vaishya descent, or of a higher origin." (Hunter's *Indian Empire*, page 196.)

Are the Present Kshatriyas and Vaishyas representatives of the ancient classes of those names ? The question whether there are any Vaishyas and Kshatriyas in the present time, was the subject of discussion in an assembly of Pandits lately held at Benares, and it was settled after a full discussion that the present Banias were really the Vaishyas of old, that they were equally entitled to the appellation of *Dwija* along with the Bráhmanas and the Kshatriyas, and that those of them among whom the ceremony of investiture with the thread had fallen into disuse, ought to revive it. The same has been the dictum for Kshatriyas also. Manu speaks of various professions in his time, but does not classify them as castes, showing that Kshatriyas and Vaishyas formed different guilds in those times according to the different professions they followed. In course of centuries and thousands of years these different guilds have crystallized into the profession-castes of the modern times, all derived from the parent stock of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, but assuming new caste-names as we have already shown. Those who think that the Vaishyas or the Kshatriyas are extinct are therefore in error.

Reform in the Caste System.—The point for consideration, however, is whether caste in the shape in which it is now met with in India, should remain or should it be modified to suit modern requirements ? It has its bright side in encouraging toleration and preserving the bonds of society intact by affording as little room for discontent with one's social status as possible. But the evil it causes overpowers the good. There is a noticeable movement upwards in some of the lower and the mixed castes of the Hindus. They are trying to have themselves recognized as forming

a part of one of the twice-born classes. On the other hand, the latter themselves are showing no disposition to widen their circle and recognize themselves as belonging to a common stock. The classes who have been the most sufferers from the present state of things are the Bráhmanas and the Kshatriyas, and the descendants of those who were once the teachers and the rulers of the nations, are now among the ranks of its commonest labourers, or serve those who were declared by their own Sastras to be liable to serve them. The lower classes of Hindus, moreover, use caste as not only an institution of keeping them isolated from the rest of the community as the higher classes do, but also make it act as a most powerful check against their doing things which are forbidden by its rules, which the higher classes do not. They impose penalties and punish breach of their caste rules by fine and excommunication in a manner which furnishes useful lessons to members of the higher castes. But whether among the lower or the higher classes, there cannot be the slightest doubt of caste standing in the way of their progress.

The changes affected by Western education in the social and political condition of the country are too patent to be ignored, and people no longer admit the claims of their fellows merely because they belong to a higher caste. The Brahmins do not command the same veneration as they did before the advent of Western education. Learning, position and wealth command more respect in these times than birth. The Sastras are, more-over, no longer the property of any class, nor does the Government of the day generally care as to what caste a man belongs in giving him certain appointments. Facilities of communication and interchange of ideas have also done much to weaken the foundations of the system, and the more progressive among the Indians are beginning to show signs of impatience against the rigidity of the present caste-restrictions. Reform, not revolution is, however, only possible, and so much of the system as is unsuited to modern times should be done away with, if not at once, at least gradually. It is useless to dream of the return of the golden age when there was no caste, when everybody was a Brahmin with ascetism and knowledge of truth for his sole duties. Nor is it possible at one sweep to destroy the work of ages or to declare that there shall not be any caste system in India. All who have tried to do so have

failed both in times past as well as present. But there is no reason why a beginning should not be made in the shape of a gradual fusion of such of the minor divisions of a caste as admit of such fusion, and to make those of its sections which can inter-dine also to intermarry and *vice versâ*, the prohibtion regarding marriage between people of the same *gotra* being retained. The basis shall have to be broadened, but the main lines of distinction shall have to be kept.

Connected with reform in the caste system is the question of re-admission into caste of those who take sea voyages for purposes of education or business. It has now been proved, from the most authoritative texts of the Sastras, that there is no re-striction of sea voyages in the latter. To exclude those who have undertaken such voyages for purposes of education or extension of business means, therefore, the exclusion from our ranks of those who are best qualified to benefit us. Such a policy is suicidal to the best interests of the community and the example set by the Vaishyas and other communities of Northern India, cannot be followed too soon by the other communities of India. They have now no restrictions regarding foreign travel, and never question the right of those who go to foreign countries to remain in caste, provided they do not on return violate its rules nor isolate themselves from it. A student sent by the Vaishya Maha Sabha for industrial training in Japan has just returned, and there are in the Vaishya community of Upper India more than a dozen barristers, doctors, engineers and others who have travelled and lived in Europe and America, and who were never excluded from the caste for doing so. Of course, some discrimination ought necessarily to be exer-cised in matters like these, but such discrimination should not take the place of imposition of harsh restrictions or impossible conditions.

The whole subject of caste is full of complication and is enough to baffle the efforts of the most ardent reformer. Those who still advocate its present rigid distinctions, seem to forget that the times require that caste must adapt itself to the times and not expect the times to conform themselves to caste pre-judices. Differences of geographical limits or occupation can no longer be allowed to break the unity originally possessed by the various castes of India, and no reformer can set a nobler

task before himself than try and have that unity restored. **With** a settled country and a people eager for progress, no **social** disability ought to stand in the way of progress, and if **caste** in its present shape stands in its way, as it certainly does, **re**form in its system cannot be made a day too soon.

The British Government has given India political unity. It is for the Indians themselves to give it that social unity which in spite of caste distinction it once possessed.

II.—The Sanskaras and the Asramas.

The aim of the Sanskaras and the Asramas of the Hindus.

The next great feature of Hindu society is its various Sanskáras (Sacraments) and its different orders of life (A'sramas), and the question for consideration is, what portion of each ought to be retained and what modified to suit modern requirements ? The aim of the Sanskáras and A'sramas was so to mould the character of the people as to qualify them for a life of peace and happiness in this world and release from trammels of birth and re-birth hereafter. The Aryan was to serve his teacher for a number of years most dutifully, in order to come out as a man learned in at least one of the four Vedas. On his entrance into society he was to marry a woman of a suitable position in life, to live the life of a good householder, earning his livelihood in the most honourable manner possible, and after seeing his children settled in life and following him in the path of virtue, gradually to retire from the world, accustoming himself to suffer hardship, lessening his wants, and ultimately passing his days in peace with a mind devoted to the realization of the highest truths of his religion. Hindu society has always been a pre-eminently religious society, but while religion in ancient India was a living reality, it is not so now and institutions which were once founded upon the deepest truths, are now adhered to as mere matters of form without their significance being at all realized. We shall therefore examine some of these institutions in the light of both the Sastras as well as modern facts, to show how they ought to be reformed to suit modern times.

The Sanskaras.—The first injunction of the Sastra was to visit your wife only in season (ritau bháryám upagamet, ऋतौ भार्या-

मुपगेमत्) in order to prevent undue sexual indulgence, as well as to ensure the offspring being strong and healthy by conservation of energy. The first three *Sanskáras*, viz., the *garbhádhána* गर्भाधान (consummation of marariage), the *punsavaṅa* पुंसवन (wish for begetting male child), which was performed in the second, third or fourth month of pregnancy, and the *simantonnayana* सीमन्तोन्नयन (the parting of the hair), which was performed in the day of the full moon of the sixth or eighth month, were all indicative of the Aryan's desire for strong and healthy offspring. He was to live upon a certain kind of food before visiting his wife, *viz.*, rice, cooked with meat and ghi. On the appearance of his wife's pregnancy he expressed his wish as follows :—" Just as a small pond, full of lotus flowers, is gently shaken by the wind, just as the wind or a forest of trees or the sea moves gently, even so do thou move gently in thy mother's womb and come out of it after the tenth month, living, with all thy bodily members, whole and entire and thy mother living." (Rig Veda IV, 4-20-7-8-9.) " Just as the earth bears all creatures, all trees and plants, all mountains and all that exists upon it, even so do thou, (O woman), bear the child in thy womb." (Atharva Veda, VI, 16-17.) " O woman, like an arrow resting in its quiver, let a male child rest in thy womb. May he be born, on the completion of the tenth month, a brave child. May Agni, the first among the gods, protect thy womb, may he protect thy offspring from the noose of death. May Varuna, the king, so order that thou, my wife, be saved from weeping for lost offspring. Mayest thou, O woman, possess a loving eye, a cheerful countenance, a happy heart, be a distributor of blessing, the protector of thy household, the rearer of thy womb, and the procreator of healthy children. May I always find happiness in thy company." These passages show how happy were the relations between husband and wife in ancient India and upon what terms man treated woman in those times. These ceremonies are now-a-days either not performed at all, or where performed they are performed as a matter of form without their religiuos significance being at all realized. In some parts of India the ceremony of consummation of marriage, known as the second marriage, tends to ward off to some extent the evil effects of child-marriage.

(*a*) **Garbhadhana.**
(*b*) **Punsavana.**
(c) **Simantonnayana.**

(d) Jatakarma.

The child is now born and the *Játakarma* जातकर्म (ceremony of birth) is at once performed. As soon as it has been washed, the father takes a little honey with a golden pin and touches its mouth with it, repeating the following prayer : " Mayest thou, O child, live for a hundred years, protected by the gods May Sawitri, the Aswins and Saraswati protect thy intellect. Mayest thou be firm like a stone and strong like an axe. Mayest thou shine like gold. Thy first name is Knowledge (Veda). Mayest thou live for a hundred years. May Indra shower blessings upon thee. O child, who art thou, what art thou ? Thou art immortal. May Sawitá give thee days, the days the nights, the days and nights, the fortnights, the fortnights the months, the months the seasons, the seasons the years, and the years long life up to old age. Thou art born of my limbs, from my heart. I join my life to thy life. Mayest thou live as long as I live. Be thou long-lived like me. We pour libations for the bestowal of a healthy mind, healthy intellect, and healthy organs upon our offspring. Let death leave us and go to the ignorant and the wicked. Let it be in the path of the sinful. I say to thee, who see-est and hearest, may my offspring be brave and thou shouldst not come among us till we have attained to full age."

(e) Namakarana.

The *Námakarana* नामकरण ceremony is next performed on the twelfth day after purification. It should take place on some lucky day of the moon, at a lucky hour, and under a good star. The child, we read in the Gobhila Grihya Sutras, is to be dressed neatly, the mother places it in the father's lap and the latter repeats the mantras repeated at birth. " The first part of a Bráhmana's compound name should indicate holiness, of a Kshatriya power, of a Vaishya wealth, and of a Sudra contempt. Let the second part of a Bráhmana's name imply prosperity, of a soldier preservation, of a merchant nourishment, and of a servant humble attendance. The names of women should be agreeable, soft, clear, captivating the fancy, auspicious, ending in long vowels and resembling words of benediction." (Manu II, 2, 30 to 40.) Now-a-days, however, if the Játakarma and Námakarana are performed, they are seldom accompanied with the fervent prayer uttered by the ancient Aryans and the simple prayer of those days has now given

place to the family astrologer giving the child two names, one according to the star under which he was born, and the other the one by which he is to be known in after years. Relations and friends make and receive presents on such occasions, which in many parts of the country are marked off by much display of wealth and indulgence in feasts and shows.

(f) Niskramana.

In its fourth month the child is taken out to see the sun (Niskramana निष्क्रमण (bringing out). The father prays: "May we see thee, Sun, the eye of the gods, for a hundred years. May we live for a hundred years. May we hear for a hundred years. May we be independent for a hundred years, and even more than a hundred years." Annaprasana अन्नप्राशन the feeding of the child with solid food, now takes place in the sixth month and the A'swaláyana Grihya Sutras enumerate the various kinds of meats with which it is to be fed, according as the father wishes it to possess abundance of strength or capacity of reading the Vedas, or prosperity. The prayers are the same as on the other three occasions Now-a-days, however, the child is fed with milk and rice but not with meats, and the prayer portion is either omitted or left to the priest to repeat. The

(g) Churakarma.

ceremony of tonsure (Churakarma), चूड़ाकर्म which comes next, takes place according to both Manu and the Grihya Sutras in the first or the third year after birth. Elaborate rules and mantras are laid down for applying water to the child's head, and for shaving it. In modern times, however, they are more honoured in the breach than the observance, and the ceremony usually takes place either at the shrine of some titulary deity or at the temple of some god or goddess, accompanied with the usual shows.

(h) The Upanyana.

We now come to the most important *sanskára* of the Hindus, which makes the three higher castes entitled to the appellation of *dwija* (twice-born). This ceremony is called *Upanyana*, उपनयन because of the child being carried to or brought near his preceptor for initiation into the Veda. He has his first birth from his natural father and mother, but his second birth is from Savitri the gayatrí as mother and the preceptor, *áchárya*, as father. In former times males and females were both eligible, for the *upany-*

ana ceremony, for we read in the Hárita Smriti : "There are two kinds of women, those who are knowers of Brahm and those who immediately enter family life. The *upanyana* ceremony, the conservation of the household fire, the study of the Vedas, and mendicancy in their own households, are for the knowers of Brahm, while for those who wish to enter family life immediately, marriage should follow *upanyana*." This custom is, however, now discarded, and we read in the Kurma Purana : "In the former *Kalpa* only tying with girdle (मुञ्जी बन्धन) was laid down for women. They were also eligible as teachers of the Vedas and could repeat the *gayatri*." But why they should not do the same now, the writer does not tell us.

The age and the time for the ceremony.

The earliest period for the *upanyana* is the seventh or the eighth year for a Bráhmana, the eleventh for a Kshatriya, and the twelfth for a Vaishya, the latest periods being respectively the 16th, the 22nd, and the 24th years, after which a *prayás chitta* (penance) is necessary. In modern times, however, though the *upanyana* is generally performed in the case of all Bráhmanas and many of the Kshatriyas, it has fallen into disuse among some sections of the Vaishyas, who are now trying to revive it.

The time for the ceremony is declared to be the spring for a Bráhmana, the summer for a Kshatriya, and the *Sarad* (autumn) for a Vaishya, though in practice it can be, and is generally performed on any auspicious day. The child is dressed neatly and decked with ornaments for the occasion, and is taken to the preceptor (*áchárya*) who is to initiate him into the *Sastras* and the practices of the good. He must not only be learned but also duly observant of the rules of the Sastras. The first preceptor is one's own father, then his grandfather, then his brother, and then men of the same caste or clan. Even women could, in former times, be preceptors ; for we are told by Dewala that "the mother, the maternal grandmother, the father and mother's sister, the grandmother's sister, and the foster-mother, could even act as gurus." Now-a-days, however, the father or mother does not generally act as a teacher and strangers or, in some cases, relations are generally resorted to for the purpose. The child is provided with a girdle, a mantle, and a staff for the occasion. A Brahman's girdle should

be of grass, a Kshatriya's catgut, and a Vaishya's wool. The staff or a Bráhmana should come up to his hair and should be made of the *Palása* wood, for a Kshatriya it should come up to his forehead and should be made of the fig-tree, and for a Vaishya it should come up to his nose and should be made of the *bel*. The mantle for the Bráhmana should be of black antelope hide, for the Kshatriya of that of common deer-skin, and for the Vaishya of goat-skin. After performing the usual *hôma* the preceptor inquires from the boy as to whether he wishes to be a Brahmachari, and on his replying in the affirmative, he takes him by the hand and invokes Surya to aid him in accepting him as his Brahmachari. The boy is now dressed as a student and the teacher, placing his hand in that of the boy's, prays: "May my heart be in thy heart, my mind with thine, do thou follow me, listen to my speech with a concentrated mind. Brihaspati has placed thee under my care, do thou follow me only, may thy thoughts be in me alone, mayest thou have good thoughts towards me, and may thy speech be regulated towards me."

The boy is now questioned as to whose pupil he is, and on his saying that he is his preceptor's pupil, the latter tells him to work for him, not to sleep in the daytime, restrain his speech and bring fuel for him. He is then invested with the sacred thread and receives the *gáyatri* mantra.

The Yagyopavita.

The *Yagyopavita* यज्ञोपवीत (sacred thread) consists of three threads, and is so called because the person wearing it is invested with the sign of *Yagya*, another name for Vishnu. Its three threads are said by some writers as representing the three attributes of Satwa, Rajas and Tamas, of which the universe is composed, or the three gods Brahmá, Vishnu and Rudra in one. Its knots represent the *pranava* with the *ardhmatra* and it is worn with the formula: "The *Yagyopavita* is most sacred, it is the ornament and the sign of Bráhmanhood. It was produced by Brahmá sitting on his seat of lotus and from the threads of the stalk of the lotus." But whatever be its esoteric significance, it is the sign of distinguishing a *dwija* from a *non-dwija*, and though many of its possessors in these times are ignorant of the duties it imposes upon its wearer, yet it originally marked the entrance of the person belonging to the first three castes into the true life of the Aryan.

Life of the Brahmachari.

Our Brahmachári is now regularly initiated into the Vedas and has to acquire learning, not with the facilities afforded by the present system of school and college education, but by the most dutiful service to his preceptor, lasting from twelve to forty-eight years according as he aspires to know one, two, three or all the four Vedas, "He should have his soul cleansed by purity of conduct, vedic rites, self-restraint and observance of vows and humility, worship of the morning and evening twilights (सन्ध्यावन्दनम्), of the sun, the sacred fire and the deities He should cast off procrastination and idleness, and should perform his ablutions thrice." (Mahábhárata Santi Parva, Chapter 191, 8.) "Always attending to the Vedas, silently reciting the mantras obtained from his preceptor, worshipping all the deities, dutifully waiting upon and serving his preceptor, with his own body smeared with clay and dirt, the person leading the Brahmachárya mode of life should always observe rigid vows, and with senses under control pay attention to the instructions he receives. Reflecting upon the Vedas and discharging all the duties, he should live dutifully waiting upon his preceptor and always bowing to him. Freedom from all other kinds of acts, never showing favour or disfavour to any one, doing good even to his enemies, these, O Sire, are the duties laid down for a Brahmacharin." (Mahábhárata Santi Parva, Chapter 51, verses 17 to 21.)

Gobhila's Rules for the Brahmachari.

Gobhila's rules for the Brahmachári were :—(1) Be obedient to thy teacher, except in treading the path of unrighteousness. (2 & 3) Avoid anger and untruthfulness. (4) Also sexual intercourse. (5) Also a bed higher than thy preceptor's. (6, 7 & 8) Also dancing and singing, perfumes and unguents. (9) Avoid sporting in water while bathing. (10, 11 & 12) Also dressing the hair and beautifying the complexion, washing the teeth and the feet, *i.e.*, do not give undue attention to these things. (13) Also shaving the hair. (14 & 15) Also honey and meat. (16) Also driving in carts drawn by bullocks. (17) Also wearing shoes inside a village. (18) Also wasting the vital seed" These rules show how hardy and simple was the life of the student of those times.

The relation between him and his preceptor was, moreover, marked with implicit obedience on his part and with deep love on

that of his preceptor. No service, however difficult or menial, was grudged by the pupil, while no fee was charged by the teacher, who most willingly communicated to him all he knew. And so highly was the Brahmacharya mode of life applauded, that even gods like Indra had to observe it for 101 years before obtaining knowledge of Brahm. (Chandogya Upanishad, Chapter 8, Section II, verse 3), Hoary sages like Sukesa and others who had already devoted their lives to it, had also to live for a year as Brahamcharins in the asylum of Pippaláda before receiving Brahmavidyá. It was extolled as superior to Yagya, यज्ञ (sacrifice), Isthta इष्टा (adoration), Sátrayanam सात्रायण (feeding hermits and the poor), Maunam मौनम् (silence), Anásakáyanam, अनाशकायनं (fasting). and Aranyyanam अरण्यायनम् (going to live in a forest). (Chandogya Upanishad, Chapter 8, Section 5.) The rishis considered the preservation of chastity not only conducive to the pupil's physical but also to his mental and moral well-being.

The student was to live upon whatever he could get by begging. He was to place all he got before his preceptor and to eat only what the latter gave him. He was most strictly enjoined not to think of women and to keep his vow of chastity inviolate, to perform his ablutions and prayers at the prescribed hours, to be diligent in study, and to receive instruction only when the teacher was willing to impart it. He was to respect his teacher as his god, to look upon him as the very image of Brahm, and it is declared that it is only the man with a teacher who knows (Ácháryaván purosho Veda (आचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद) (*Chandogya Up.*, VI, 14-2), and that knowledge acquired otherwise is theft of knowledge. Vidya (knowledge) is, moreover, represented as telling the Bráhmana to impart her only to one who is qualified so that she may be powerful

There were life-long students also in ancient India, who never left their teacher's home and dutifully attended them till the dissolution of their bodies, otherwise the ordinary practice was to leave on the completion of the period of studentship.

Life of a Modern Hindu Student.

The two great features of the student's life in ancient India, *viz.*, his rigid observance of chastity and residence in his preceptor's house, are, however, now either unknown among, or cannot be observed, by the majority of present Hindu students. The *upanayana* ceremony is also more a formal than a living institution.

The student does not generally leave his family to go and live in his preceptor's home as soon as he receives the sacred thread, nor does he study under the person who invests him with it. His round of mendicancy is now over in a few seconds and his mantle, staff and girdle are worn only to be discarded. His return home (Samávartan) takes place the very moment he is invested with the thread. No relation is established between him and the person who invests him with the thread, and he is at liberty to seek instruction wherever he can find it. Sanskrit has, however, still great hold upon the people of India, and many Hindus even now study it for years even though they know it does not at all pay them to do so. At the chief centres of learning, like Benares and Navadipa in Bengal, Bráhmana and other students still flock from all parts of the country. In the former, besides an old Sanskrit College maintained by the Government, there are several indigenous Sanskrit Colleges supported by the rich, besides many small schools and *pathshalas* where Pandits teach their pupils like the rishis of old days. The same is the case with many of the Sanyasis who look upon imparting instruction to others as a part of their duty in life. In Navadipa also students are regularly taught and there, as well as in Benares, those who are unable to maintain themselves either receive their daily meals at the various *aunakshetras* (feeding-houses) established by the rich and the public-spirited, or in some cases from their teachers thmeselves, who earn money at Saradhas and other occasions for their own as well as their pupils' maintenance. In some of these *Kshetras* as many as 500 students and sanyasis are fed during the day, and in this way the study of Sanskrit which, but for its modern revival among the educated classes, would have greatly declined, is being kept up by the Bráhmanas. In Haradwar and Hrishikesha also some of the Sanyasis have regular establishments for the study of Sanskrit, employing a staff of teachers for the purpose. Instruction in such institutions is not only freely given, but the pupils are fed and lodged in the school. The Bráhmana or the Sanyasi of to-day, whatever be the extent of his learning, has thus still some of the spirit of his ancestors left in him in imparting instruction as a part of his duty, the pupil sharing in many respects the comforts of life of his master, as well as cheerfully undergoing the discomforts he suffers. Service is not exacted from pupils in the same way as it was in

old times. They are not told to tend their preceptor's cows when grazing, nor do other menial work for him, but love and obedience are demanded and willingly given.

Among the classes who have received the advantages of a western culture, a Hindu revival and a greater impetus towards the study of Sanskrit, are also most noticeable. Parents and children are now-a-days showing greater eagerness to study their ancient classic than their immediate predecessors did, and a movement in favour of education in schools and colleges combining the scientific training of the West with the religious and philosophic training of the East, is coming into prominence. The Hindu's spirit of religious inquiry has been roused and the day is probably not distant when Sanskrit will not be the dead but the living language of the people of India. All throughout the country men of wealth and position are liberally endowing or founding institutions for the promotion of Sanskrit learning, and instead of the ancient system of teaching being altogether discarded, there is also a movement towards reviving it in some places by the resuscitation of the *tol* and the *Gurukula* system of education, and in others by combining a knowledge of the literature and philosophy of the East with a knowledge of the literature and philosophy of the West. How far it will produce the type of scholars the country requires, time alone will show. But that a revival of Sanskrit learning will do good is undoubted. The merits of the old system were its (1) cheapness, (2) inculcation of habits of reverence and love on the part of the pupil, and love and strong interest in the welfare of the pupil on the part of the teacher, and (3) the general absence of all pernicious effect on the health of the student. The system, though poor in average, was yet more successful in giving the world a greater number of devoted scholars than our present school and college system.

Results of the present system of education.

On the other hand, the present system of education is not only highly injurious to the healths and physiques of the majority of our students, but also fails to encourage original research and comprehensiveness of thought. It incapacitates most of them from serious intellectual pursuit and makes them irreligious, devoid of respect for age and authority, courage of conviction, besides giving rise to a spirit of unhealthy pessim-

ism and despondency of spirit, with little or no disposition to look beyond present wants. The number of educated men, dying even before the age of 50, is fast increasing amongst us and physical degeneration of the race is threatening the Hindus in the near future. Educated Hindus show little or no disposition to work among or sympathize with their less educated countrymen and are unfortunately coming to form a class along with the many other castes and classes now found in India. The cost of a University education already tells hardly upon the Indian parent. It is now more than a thousand rupees for an ordinary B.A. degree. Under the new rules it promises to be much more. Twenty-five years ago, after paying for his education, a lad of parts brought a clear saving of between 300 and 400 rupees to his family. In England the cost of a University degree is about £488-10, and if the student gets a scholarship of £125 a year, it is only £113-10. On the other hand, the prospects of the Indian B. A. are not more than Rs. 30 or 40 a month to start with, while the English graduate starts with about ten times as much. It may therefore be doubted if the present system of education is suited to the present needs of the country, and the general opinion is that, unless it is made less rigid, less costly and more suited to the modern requirements of the community, it is not likely to lead to better results. The present tendency seems to be to make University education both costly and difficult of attainment, not only for a man of ordinary, but for one of good means also. This, I am afraid, is no remedy for the evil.

The question of religious education of our youth is even more important than secular education. The matter was brought before the Universities Commission who did not, however, see their way towards making any specific recommendation on the subject. In my evidence before the Commission I said:—" It is not so much the reading of moral text-books as of acquiring the truths of religion and morality through intimate personal contact with a teacher, that ought to be our aim in correcting the present irreligious tendencies of our students. For this purpose not only the intellectual capacity, but the character and religious tendencies of the teacher cannot be too carefully scrutinized before he is employed in a school or college. Our students are taught morality and principles of universal religion in the class

room through books which are prescribed by the University, but the impression left upon their minds is not lasting, because they seldom find their teacher making any approach to what he teaches. The simplest book taught by a teacher, who is himself in earnest, will do more than the loftiest philosophy taught by one who thinks his work in the school or college to be over after he has lectured to his students from a certain text-book for a certain number of hours. It was different in the old Hindu times where the teacher was generally a living example of what he taught. We may have degrees in comparative religion for those who seek for them, but to make the majority of our students good and virtuous and love and practise religious truth, we must try to present it to them through living examples. Books on morality and religion cannot be dispensed with, but we must not lose sight of the fact that all success in the direction of a moral and spiritual life comes more from the personal influence of the teacher than of the books he teaches. I would therefore suggest (1) that adequate provision be made for religious education in all colleges and schools by calling upon the leaders of the respective communities of which their students are generally composed, to find funds for the same; (2) appoint the best men available for imparting religious education; (3) make over its supervision to the college authorities; and (4) take care that religious controversies are not allowed. I need not here particularize books which will be useful as religious text-books though for Hindu students. Books, like the Bhagwat Gita with certain portions left out and the text-books of Hinduism which are being published by the Central Hindu College, Benares, and for all students books like Emerson's Essays, may be suggested.

For Hindu students I would, moreover, have periodical lectures on such portions of the Vedas, Institutes of Manu, the great Hindu Epics, and the various systems of Hindu philosophy as are free from controversial matter. In all Hindu Boarding-houses I would also have all students perform their prayers at prescribed hours with some resident teacher or professor of the same faith. I would also have inquiry into religious truth by college authorities encouraging lectures on religion by eminent preachers or teachers who happen to be passing through the place and who agree to give them without attacking other religions. I must, however, confess

that Hindu parents show little regard for the religious education of their boys at home, and they shall have to act more earnestly in this direction if they wish to turn the current of thought the right way."

The Indian parent sees the defects of the present system, and yet he has no option but to educate his children according to it, and I think he has a right to expect the same modifications in it as have been made in other progressive countries. The future of the educated youth of the country does not seem to be very bright or promising.

(*i*) **Samavartan.** After reading one, two, three or all the four Vedas, the student in ancient India left his preceptor, but not before making him a present (guru dakshina), not as a fee, for learning was never sold in this country, but as a mark of respect. The parting advice of the teacher to the pupil, as given in one of the Upanishads, may well be imitated by modern teachers also. Says the Guru: "Speak the truth. Practise *dharma*. Let there be no neglect of daily reading the Scripture. Having brought welcome wealth to thy teacher, do not cut off the line of offspring. Do not neglect truth. Do not neglect duty. Do not neglect prudence. Do not neglect prosperity. Let there be no neglect of thy duties towards the gods and the forefathers. Let thy mother be a god unto thee. Let thy father be a god unto thee. Let thy teacher be a god unto the. Let thy guest be a god unto thee. All acts which are unblameable ought to be done, no others. All our praiseworthy doings ought only to be followed by thee, no others. Bráhmanas who are better than us ought to be provided with a seat. What is to be given should be given with faith, not without faith, with prudence, with modesty, with fear and with affection. If thou hast doubt regarding any act or course of conduct, act as Bráhmanas of meek and sober judgment do in thy neighbourhood" (Taitreya Upanishad, 1—11.) Love of parents was always recognised as a most sacred duty in India, and we read in the beautiful story of the good fowler in the Mahábhárata that, after imparting a knowledge of Bráhm to a young Bráhmana, he told him in reply to his question as to who were his gods, that his aged father and mother were his gods. "These," says the fowler, "are my gods. What is due unto the gods I do to them. And O Bráhmana the parents, the sacred fires, the atma (self), the preceptor, these five are worthy of the highest

respect from a person who wishes for prosperity. By serving them one acquires every prosperity, and it is the eternal duty of all householders." (Vana Parva, Chapter 214, verses 19 and 28.) Nothing can also be more touching than the story of Rama living in exile for fourteen years and refusing the crown offered by his brother Bharata, simply to carry out his father's commands, or Yudhishthira's four brothers following him dutifully through good and evil fortune. How vastly different it is now-a-days when neither parents and teachers are respected, nor often deserve the respect of the younger generation, nor do the latter often ealize the importance of their duties to others.

Marriage.

This brings us to the institution of marriage and the life of the householder. The Sastras declare every Aryan to be a debtor to the rishis, the gods and the ancestors, and that he should discharge the first obligation by observing Brahmacharya and studying the Vedas, the second by performing sacrifices, and the third by marrying and begetting children. After having discharged the first by living as a student with his preceptor, he should enter family life in order to discharge the other two. "A son," says Baudháyána, "secures these worlds, a grandson bliss, and a great-grandson a seat even above the highest heavens. By begetting a virtuous son one saves himself as well as his seven preceding and seven following generations. One should therefore beget children on a chaste wife, of his own caste, married according to rites, possessed of all good qualities, devoted to none but himself, handsome in appearance, young and healthy, having brothers and not belonging to his own *gotra*, and born in an *arsha* family." The Vedic laws of marriage introduce us to a state of society where men and women acted as free agents in matrimonial matters and where women were treated not as inferiors but as equal to men. "How many a maid is pleasing to the suitor who would marry her for her riches. If the girl be both good and fair of feature, she finds by her own worth a friend among the people." (Rig Veda, X, 27-12.) Early marriages were never common in ancient India. On the contrary, selection was the rule. The story of the marriage of Suryá (Sury's daughter), moreover, shows that both husbands and wives of that period fully realized the importance of the marriage sacrament. At the marriage ceremony the husband told th

wife: "I take thy hand in mine for happy fortune, that thou mayest reach with me, thy husband, old age. The gods Bhaga, Aryaman, Sawita and Purandhi have given thee to me for my household's mistress. O Pushan, send her on most auspicious, who shall be the sharer of my pleasures and shall twine her loving arms around me and welcome my love and embraces" As soon as the woman reached her husband's home, the latter offered a sacrifice to the fire, and the bridal pair were addressed as follows: "Be ye not parted, dwell ye here, reach the full term of human life with sons and grandsons, rejoice, sport and play in your own household." The husband also prayed: "May Prájapatí give us children, may Aryaman adorn us till old age comes near, auspiciously do thou enter thy husband's house, bringing blessings to his bipeds and quadrupeds. Be not evil-eyed nor slayer of thy husband, bring welfare to his cattle, be radiant and gentle-hearted. Love the gods, bring forth heroes . . . . . O bounteous Indra, make this bride blessed in her sons and grandsons. Vouchsafe to her ten sons and make her husband the eleventh man. Over thy husband's father and mother, over his sisters and brothers, be thou the queen of his household. May the universal gods, the waters join our hearts. May Matriswa, the Dhatrí and the Sarswati bind us together." (Rig Veda, X, 35, 36, 37 and 42 to 47.)

In the period that followed there were also no early marriages.

Causes of early marriage in India, and its results.

In the Smriti period the ages were 30 and 24 for males and not less than 12 for females, though it was declared by Manu (IX—94 and 89) that a girl may remain a maid all her life rather than be given to an unsuitable person. Susruta, the well known Hindu work on medicine, laid down the rule that "a woman below the age of 16 who conceives from a man below 25, either miscarries, or if the child is born it does not live long, or if it lives long, its vital parts become weak. Let no one therefore lay the seed in an immature girl." In practice the rule was to marry after the period of Samavartan was over for males, and for females after they had attained puberty; and the stories of Swayamvaras of daughters of kings, show that girls married at an age when they could judge of the result of feats of arms or of the wealth and prowess of their suitors. The way in which Sita, Savitri, Damayanti and Draupadi chose their husbands,

shared their misfortunes, resisted temptation, or even saved their husbands from death, as in the case of Savitri, shows that early marriage could not have been the rule either in the earlier Smriti or the epic periods. It is only in later Smritis, like Parasara, that the rule regarding early marriage is largely met with; and the verse of Parasara that a girl is a Gouri at 8, a Rohini at 9 and a maiden at 10 which is now quoted in support of early marriage, finds no corroboration in the writers of the earlier Smriti period. If girls in ancient India had developed so early as these ages seem to indicate, they would not have produced the strong and healthy Aryans they did in those days. Both men and women were careful in observing their Brahmacharya for a proper period and entered the Grihasta Asrama (life of a householder) only when they were fully capable of doing so. Husbands and wives used to dine together, sit on the same seats and drive in the same carriages always, and not merely on occasions of marriage. There were no costly ceremonies attending marriages, nor were large dowers demanded from fathers of girls, nor were the latter sold, nor had fathers of girls to beg or borrow to find a bridegroom for them, but gave lands, cows, slaves, dresses, buffaloes, gold, jewels, horses and other things to the best of their means.

When the present custom of child and early marriages came in full force, cannot be historically known, though the popular belief seems to be that it arose in the Mahomedan times when abduction of girls with desirable features was common. According to Mr. Gait, Superintendent of Census for Bengal, it is largely due to (1) the practice of hypergamy, (2) to the exigencies of the caste-system and the necessity of providing for a girl before she could indulge in fancies of her own, and so perhaps bring social ruin upon her family, (3) to the survival of a practice necessary in the oldest type of society where an unmarried woman was exposed to a double evil, the stain of communism with her own and the risk of forcible abduction into another. (Page 256 of Bengal Census Report for 1901.) The last of these causes does not now operate towards inducing early marriage, and the only considerations that influence the age of marriage, are the smallness of the circle of choice both for brides and bridegrooms, due to the smallness of the caste to which the parties belong, and the popular

sentiment that it is safer and more respectable to marry a girl as early as possible, and lastly, to the deep hold which Parasara's text quoted above has upon the popular mind. On the other hand, where the cost of obtaining a wife or husband is comparatively great as it is in some of the castes, the number of old maids and bachelors is large, in spite of Sastric texts and sentiment. For instance, among the Kulin Brahmins of Bengal, when the father has not the means of complying with the extortionate demands of bridegrooms of a higher class and cannot marry the girl to a bridegroom of the lower one, she remains an old maid. It is also not uncommon for one man to marry several daughters of a family, or for two families to exchange wives and husbands, irrespective of age and Sastric texts. The law of supply and demand operates in the marriage as it does in the other markets of India. In parts of the country, especially Bengal in the name of *Pan*, are extorted large sums of money from fathers of brides by bridegrooms, and University degrees now have a less value in Government service or the professions than in the marriage market. An M.A. commands a good price both among Brahmins and Kayasthas of Bengal. Among Kulins as much as Rs. 5,000 is paid for an M.A. bridegroom. Among other sects of Brahmins, as much as Rs. 1,000 is paid. Among the Maithal Brahmins of Behar the rule of payment is, that the party who is of the inferior caste, whether of the bride or the bridegroom, pays the other party Rs. 35. In the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab it is somewhat different, and the bridegroom only receives presents suited to the means of the bride's father, though the latter usually oversteps them and runs into debt in order to make a show of respectability and stand well with his brethren in the caste. Among some of the Brahmins, for instance, the Kanykubjas, large sums of moneys are extorted by fathers of bridegrooms. Among some of the Kshatriya tribes marriage expenses also lead to female infanticide. The cost of a marriage is almost everywhere ruinous and leaves a family embarrassed for many years, and efforts made to reduce such expenses by various social reform associations in the country have only been very partially successful. The worst offenders in this respect are the highest classes who get mad on the occasion and indulge in most absurd and meaningless displays of wealth. One would, for instance, put up hundis or currency notes of small values or copper and

brass vessels upon frames of bamboos which are carried before the bridal procession, to be plundered by the poor and other hangers-on when the party reaches the bride's house. Another would feast thousands of people of all the villages around. A third would throw large sums of money, when bringing the bride home. Among Rajputs the Walter Hitkarni Sabha has been doing its best to stop it. The Vaishya Maha Sabha and other reform bodies are doing the same. But, as a rule, every Hindu spends more on occasions of marriage than he ought, and often involves himself in serious trouble. One of the causes for this extravagance in marriage expenses is the custom of child-marriage. In cases where the parties are not children, such extravagance is not common. Stop child-marriage and you achieve the three-fold result of conserving the energy of the nation, saving its youth, and preventing waste of money, forwarding the education of the race and making it better fitted for the struggle of modern life. The figures of the last census show that among Hindus out of every 1,000, 25 males and 70 females are married before the age of ten, 8 and 16 before the age of 5, and 160 and 468 between 10 and 15. Between 15 and 20 four-fifths of the girls are married. Among Mahomedans only 7 per cent. against 12 per cent. of the Hindu girls marry before the age of 10 and only 39 per cent. against 47 of the Hindus between 15 and 20. Among Hindus one woman out of 15 is a widow, and one out of every 1,000 between the age of 1 and 5, 16 before the age of 10 and 20 between the age of 10 and 15 are widows. Among Mahomedans the number of child-widows is much smaller, and they have always the liberty to re-marry which Hindus have not.

Reform in the Marriage System.

The question is, how should such a state of things be put a stop to? The Government has made it penal for a man to have intercourse with his wife before the age of 12. But infant marriage is not less rampant. The Arya and the Brahmo Samajes which have abolished it, represent a very small section of the community, while the efforts of the Indian Social Conference in the same direction have borne but indirect fruit. A number of caste associations have, however, lately sprung up in the country and are steadily working in this direction, each according to its needs, and their efforts promise better success in the near future. As an instance I may mention the Vaishya Maha Sabha of

which I have been acting as General Secretary for the last ten years. Prevention of early marriages is a prominent part of our programme, and we have tried to convince our community not only by arguments drawn from reason, but also by appeal to authority of the Sastras from the mouths of their most honoured and recognized exponents. Our success has not yet been great, but we find a steadily growing public opinion in our favour and the number of child-marriages gradually becoming less every year, and those who do not indulge in them are no longer looked upon with the same disfavour as before. Little argument is now necessary to convince the orthodox of the necessity of postponing the marriage of boys till the age of 15 or 16. In the matter of girls, we have more difficulty and have had to take the safest age for marriage at 12 and consummation of marriage about two years later, and the public are gradually falling in with our views. There is now not the same opposition as there was ten years ago, and those who oppose us and adhere to the old rule of 8, 9 or 10 for girls, are beginning to be looked upon with disfavour.

Hypergamy or marrying above the caste or sub-caste, though at one time it may have given rise to early marriages, is not now a cause of such marriages, at least in Upper India. The want of suitable husbands for girls operates as a more powerful cause, and parents who would otherwise postpone the marriage of their daughters have to give them in marriage as soon as a suitable husband is available. It is absurd to think that, for many long years to come, marriages in India could be made by mutual selection or unrestricted courtship. Whatever it may have been in the India of the past, the present condition of Hindu society, time-honored traditions, the influence of religion and the general distrust of man towards woman, all stand in the way of ideas of love and courtship of Europe coming to be fashionable in India. Perhaps in Europe also, the system is not an unmixed blessing. In India Hindu society requires to advance morally and intellectually much further than it has done, before it can change its present system for what it was in the Vedic period. All that it can at once do to put a stop to early marriages is to broaden the basis of selection in the manner pointed out above. Legislation has been attempted in this direction by two of the Hindu states in Southern and Western India. In Mysore they have made marriage of girls below eight to

be penal. In Baroda marriage of boys below 16 and of girls below 12 has been made penal. These states are, however, Hindu states legislating for Hindu subjects, and yet the Baroda Act is still is the subject of much adverse comment both there as well as outside. I happened to be there some time ago and addressed a crowded audience on the question of social reform and am glad to find that my suggestion as to age has been accepted by the Baroda authorities. But how far the people will co-operate in carrying out the law, remains to be seen. In British India legislation in this direction is out of question, and the solution of the question must be left to the people themselves, according to their own lines, and for that the outlook is not quite hopeless.

As I have pointed but more than once those sections of a caste which interdine should also intermarry and *vice versâ*, and that if the efforts of social reformers were directed towards this, they will be more successful than by trying to achieve the more ambitious ideals of intermarriage between various castes in India. Even this will not be easy of achievement and the number of sections and sub-sections of a caste with their petty jealousies and ideas of precedence and social superiority, shall always be found enough to drive the reformer to despair. Speaking from experience of my own community, the Vaishyas, the only result of ten years' continuous effort has been to widen the circle of choice of husbands and wives by bringing people from various parts of the country together and thus saving them from the necessity of both child-marriage and extravagance in marriages necessitated by unions made locally. The different sections of the Vaishyas which are only due to locality, such as Agarwalas and Churuwals, are beginning to intermarry. The Jains and the Vaishnavas also intermarry. But intermarriage among sub-sections other than local is not yet common, though if steady efforts continue to be made, something more tangible may result in future.

The argument *per contra* based upon the number of happy homes met with among the Hindus, the chastity and devotion of our women and our young men being less likely to be led astray by than without early marriages, loses sight of the fact that the poor wife, however chaste, brings forth sickly children and is often a life-long invalid and the husband scarcely able to withstand the pressure of modern life. In ancient India where early

marriages were not common, the woman was as chaste as, and brought forth healthier children than now, and the man though as devoted to his wife, was able to withstand the wear and tear of life better than now.

The Hindu Widow.

The position of the Hindu widow is very peculiar, and her lot, if she happens to be a child or a girl-widow, one of life-long misery. Exposed to all sorts of temptations, constantly suspected and watched by even her nearest and dearest relations, not allowed to re-marry, bound by custom to a life of asceticism, her miseries have always excited the sympathy of the reformer and the patriot. The presence of even one child or girl-widow in a family is sufficient to cast a gloom over every festivity, and people curse the day when she was born. And yet so strong is the force of custom, so powerful the influence of tradition, that the majority of these Hindu widows accept their lot with patience and devote themselves to a life of self-denial with cheerful resignation, and instances where they go wrong are not so common as might have been expected. The same custom which prohibits their re-marriage, also comes to their rescue in another way, in making their husbands and their own relations provide immediately after the death of their husbands by voluntary contribution a fund for their private use. The male and female members of their families, though they watch them, also do their utmost to make their lot as bearable as they can. If a widow happens to be the mother of a family, she at once becomes the matron of the family and her authority in matters relating to it is supreme. In many cases she is its guardian angel ministering to the sick, and sympathizing with the fortunate. And yet it is a cruel custom which prohibits the re-marriage of at least such of the widows who have lost their husbands before they reached the age of puberty, and in whose case it is a misnomer to say that they were married in any, even in the later Sastric, sense of the term. We have here one widow for every six women against one in thirteen in England. Amongst Hindus, one girl between the age of 1 and 5, 6 between the ages of 5 and 10 and 21 between 10 and 15 are widows. That such a large number of child and girl-widows can never contribute to the well-being of a community is beyond question. It is, moreover, common knowledge that

not only crimes of infanticide and fratricide, but also a large proportion of the prostitutes of our large towns are the results of the prohibition of widow re-marriage. The question has been exercising public attention for the last fifty years. The first practical protest recorded against it was by the late Ishwarchunder Vidyasagar, whose untiring efforts in this direction resulted in the passing of a law legalizing the re-marriage of Hindu widows in the shape of Act 15 of 1856. Since then efforts have been made in various parts of India, especially in the Bombay Presidency, to popularise the custom. But orthodoxy defies the reformer and the law, and the only result of these efforts have been twenty-one widow marriages in 48 years. In Bengal, with the exception of the Brahmos, orthodox Hindus still look upon the re-marriage of widows with strong disfavour, although the number of widowed females there is the largest of any in India. In Upper India the Arya Samàj and one or two other reform associations are in favour of widow marriage, and a few marriages have lately been celebrated among the Jains and the Agarwala Vaishyas of Meerut and Muzuffernaggar. But popular feeling is still strongly against it, and it will take some time before the higher castes, the twice-born, recognize it even with the same grace as they have done the raising of the marriageable age of girls. The reformers are looked down upon by the rest of the community, and any association which sets this prôgramme before it, at once alienates orthodox sympathy from it. To minimize the evil, the raising of the marriageable age of girls on the one hand, and discouragement of unequal marriages on the other, are therefore the only possible means of reducing the number of child and girl-widows, and many of the reform associations have adopted these as their next best course. The number of girls who are left widows before the age of 12 will be sensibly reduced, if not altogether disappear, if the age of marriage were fixed at 12, as has been done in some parts of the country. On the other hand, the number of girl-widows between 10 or 15 is most high in the case of those who marry them at or after the age of 40. Such marriages are often made for money, and husbands pay large sums to fathers of girls for them. They are looked down upon by the people and the Vaishya Maha Sabha and other sabhas have steadily denounced this practice and

the public sympathize with them so far. If, therefore, we sto such unequal marriages, we reduce the number of girl-widows be tween 10 and 15. In cases where the ages of the husban and the wife are equal, the husband generally outlives th wife, or if the wife survives the husband, she does so a a time of life when she would not care to re-marrry any mor in India than anywhere else. It is only in the case of boys wh have not overcome even the diseases incidental to childhood, tha their marriage with girls of equal or younger age, brings widow hood on the latter and for that 16 as the marriageable age, for boy would minimize the evil. The prejudice against widow-marriag is not due to any fear of glut in the marriage market, or leadin to any undesirable competition between maidens and widows fo husbands, nor to any desire to circumscribe a widow's rights but simply to tradition which associates such re-marriage witl social degradation and brings the caste to the level of the lower castes among whom it prevails. So strong is this feeling that i prompts those of the lower castes who claim to advance high in the social scale, to commence doing so by stopping wido re-marriage. It is seen in the case of Mahomedans also. Among them, in spite of their being no religious prohibition of wido re-marriage, widows of the higher classes do not re marry becaus of the social degradation attaching to a custom which is in vogue among the lower classes only. The advocates of widow marriage have thus a hard fight to conquer before they can make it popular among the people.

III.—THE LIFE OF THE HINDUS IN ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES.

Laws of Health.—We have seen that the Aryans of ancient India were a strong, healthy and active people, full of life and vigor, who not only prayed for a long-lived progeny, but took practical steps to ensure longevity both for themselves and their children. If they wished to live for a 100 years, which they considered to be the full duration of man's life upon earth, they also took the necessary precautions to secure it. They looked upon man not so much from outside as from inside, and made the spiritual, the moral and the mental in him rule the physical. Health was considered to be the parity of correlation between the

inner and the outer man, the old rule of *means sena in corpore sano*, and disease was the absence or the excess or disparity of such correlation between the time, the mind and the objects of the senses. They looked upon both the mind and the body as the seats of health and disease, and tried to secure not only the proper correlation of all the various humours of man's body, but also peace of mind. Like the ruler of his town or the driver of his cart, man was enjoined always to be careful of his body, regulating his daily life with reference to the seasons of the year. The year was divided into six seasons, - the Sisira, corresponding to Magha and Phalguna, the Vasanta to Cháitra and Vaisákh, the Grishma to Jaistha and Asarh, the Vársha to Sravána and Bhadrapada, the Sarada to Aswin and Kártika, and the Hemanta to Margshirsha and Pausha. The first three were the seasons of taking (adána) आदान and the last three of giving (*visarg*) विसर्ग. In the former, when the sun was in the northern solstice, a mode of life different to that which it was in the southern solstice was prescribed. In the latter portion of the taking and the first of the giving period, *viz.*, in summer and the rains, the body was considered to be weaker than in the intermediate periods, the Sarada and the Vasanta, when it was neither weak nor strong, while in the last portion of the Hemanta and the first portion of the Sisira, it was the strongest. Various kinds of flesh-meat, and milk and its preparations, rubbing the body with oils of divers description, exposure to the sun and keeping warm were recommended for the Hemanta and the Sisira seasons, while in the latter exposure and all kinds of pungent and bitter things were to be avoided. In the Vasanta season use of purgatives and unguents and cleaning the body with cool and fragrant water, light food and light drinks, as as well as athletic sports, were recommended. In the Grishma season, when the body becomes weak, avoidance of all physical excesses and the use of cooling foods and drinks, and the avoidance of all intoxicating liquors, in the Varsha season sour and saline foods, cleanliness in dress, and in the Sarada foods which check the bile and avoidance of exposure to the sun, were recommended. Not only preservation of health but also subjugation of the senses, was the primary object of the rishis of ancient India, and for this purpose the practices of the good and the wise were most strictly enjoined to be followed, not only in matters

spiritual but also in matters physical. Worship of the gods and the wise, the aged and the learned, sweetness of speech, reverence to guests, control of the senses, emulation and not jealousy of others' virtues, strenuous exertion for one's good, cleverness and ability, above all righteousness of behaviour and honesty of purpose, were considered to be even more necessary to secure good health than regular purification of the body by baths, cleanliness, decency in dress, avoidance of impure persons and filthy places and bodily excesses. Man was declared to consist of eight *saras* or elemen's— the skin, the blood, the flesh, the fat, the bones, the marrow, the vital seed and the mind—and only he in whom all these existed in due proportion, was held to be the strongest and the healthiest man of his time, capable of enduring fatigue and toil, possessed of confidence in himself, attentive to everything that required attention, his body firm, his tread well balanced, and his voice deep and reverberating, possessed of happiness and power, free from symptoms of bodily or mental decay, not subject to sudden outbursts of temper, and blessed with a strong and healthy offspring.

Exemplified in the lives of ancient Hindus.

All the great rishis and warriors of ancient India, like Vashistha, Vyasa, Rama, Lakhsman, Hanuman, Krishna, Bhishma, Arjuna, Bhima, Karna, &c., as described in the Mahábhárata and the Rámáyana, were persons possessed of strength of both body and mind. Rama is described by Valmiki to be "tall and broad-shouldered, strong of limb, with a neck having the triple line of the conch shell, of massive jaw, broad chest, deep muscle, with arms extending to the thighs, possessing a stately head, a stately brow and a stately tread, limbs set in fair proportion, large eyes, shining smartly, as well versed in the Vedas and Vedangas as in the art of war, beloved by all, of lofty aims, ever surrounded by the good, equal to Vishnu in might, to the fire which destroys the world in anger, to the earth in forgiveness, to the god of virtue himself in truth." (Valmiki Rámáyan I. I.) Krishna is described to be a person possessing a "delightful and lovely countenance, with eyes like the leaves of the lotus, smooth cheeks, broad and brilliant forehead, neck like a conch, a broad chest, a belly falling in graceful folds with a deep-seated navel, round arms reaching up to the thighs, firm and well-

knit thighs and legs, and well-formed feet and toes.'' He is also mentioned to be as great an adept in the art of driving a chariot, as in looking after horses and on the field of battle, with showers of arrows falling and warriors pressing on all sides, he groomed the horses of Arjuna, while the latter not only pierced the earth with his shafts and brought out a jet of water for the horses to drink, but also made a hall of arrows for the Rishi Narada who happened to come there, and yet Krishna, smiling with the coolest assurance, as if he were amidst women and not on the field of battle, removed the pain and fatigue of the horses, plucked out their arrows, and bathed them properly (Mahábhárata Drona Parva, Chapters 99 and 100.) Poetical as this may seem, it has at least this basis of truth, that the best men of those times were as strong in body as in mind. This was due to proper conservation of energy and never letting it to be wasted. Gobhila's rules for the Brahmachari, which I have quoted above, show how careful the rishis were in making their followers strong and hardy.

The daily life of the Hindu in ancient times—Sandhya, its meaning and object.

To keep body and mind in proper order, the householder was also enjoined to observe certain rules of life. He was to leave his bed at the Brahma Muhurta about 4 A.M., when the sun was below the horizon, to think of *dharma* and *artha* as to what was right and proper, and to remember Vishnu. He was then to answer his calls of nature and after washing and bathing, to say his morning prayers, the *pratah sandhya*, प्रातः संध्या. So obligatory was the latter held to be, that the king was enjoined in the Mahábhárata (Anusasana Parva, Chapter 104, verse 19) to make Bráhmanas, who did not perform it, to do the work of Sudras, and it was said that the rishis attained to long life in consequence of their regularity in performing it. Its object was to make man pray for the forgiveness of his sins, to acquire internal and external purity, and to know his relation to the universe and its maker and his goal as unity with Brahma. The Rishis declared that, if properly performed, Sandhya was alone conducive to the highest end of man. The sun they worshipped in it, was not the physical Sun in the heavens, but the Purusha within it, and the time and place of its performance, *viz.*, morning and evening on the bank of a river

or other secluded spot, were enjoined in order to ensure calmness of mind and concentration of thought.

In praying to Surya, Agni, Manyu (the god presiding over anger) and Manyuputi, the god presiding over desire and hatred, for purification of sins committed during the day and night "through mind, speech, hands, feet, organs of generation or in any other manner," as well as in offering "all that was of evil as a sacrifice to the god of waters, the origin of immortality, the Truth, and the Light, *i e.*, Brahm, who is the origin of the universe and free from evil," (Taitriya Aranyaka Prapathaka, 10 Anuvaka 14,) the performer recognized his sinful nature upon earth and wished to purify all that was of evil in him before approaching his Maker. In praying to the waters to give him the power of intellect, splendour and strength of eyes, to make him fit to receive that rasa (Brahm) which is beneficial, or in addressing them "as kind mothers who make their children fit to receive the rasa" (Parabrahm) and surrendering himself to them as the abode of Parabrahman, or in wishing for purification from sin "just as one afflicted by heat is refreshed by taking shelter under a tree, or one who is impure by a bath, or as ghee by passing through cloth," the worshipper wished to wash himself clean in and out in order to be fit for receiving the light of Brahm.

The object of the *agha marshana* mantra अघमर्षण, which is taken from Rig Veda X, 191, was also to make man recognize that Truth and Eternal Law were the origin of the universe, that in the Mahapralaya, when all universe was merged into Brahme Brahm—Truth—alone existed, that from it was produced night (matter in its unmanifested condition), that from thought of Brahman, kindled to its most, came waters in their causal form, that from it evolved Brahmá, the maker of the world, in its manifested condition, that he created in due order the sun and the moon as in the former kalpas, that he is the ordainer of the days and nights, the year, the heavens, the earth, the regions of the air and light.

The Gayatri, with its seven Vyahritis and its Sirsha mantra, was also enjoined to be recited, as leading the worshipper to the highest end of man. With his breath restrained, he meditated upon the seven worlds or the seven states of consciousness, Bhu (भूः),

Bhuvah (भुवः), Swah (स्वः), Janah (जनः), maha (महः), tapas (तपस), Satyam (सत्यं), the Gayatri and the Sirsha mantras as indicating his identity with Brahm. The seven Vyahritis denoted the seven attributes of the Deity as Pure Being, all Knowledge, all Bliss, all Power, Omnipotence, all Energy, all Truth. The meaning of the Shirsha आपो ज्योतिः रसोऽमृतं ब्रह्म) is that the all-pervading, all light, all essence, all immortality is Brahman. The interpretation of the Gayatri Mantra as given by Sayana is: "Let us meditate as on ourselves, on the shining Creator and All-Pervader, that Divine Light which destroys Avidyá and its effects. May that Sun enlighten our intelligences." Sankar's interpretation is the same: "I, the Pratyagatman who am a mere witness of things seen by the Buddhi, meditate on my nature as that Brahman which is well known, which presides over everything, which is of the nature of the highest bliss, which is not the cause of sorrow, and which is of the nature of knowledge." The literal meaning of the Gayatri, *viz.*, "Let us meditate on that excellent glory of the Divine Vivifier, may He enlighten our understandings," also points more towards the meditation upon the Purusha within the sun, than upon the latter as we see it in the heavens. The ideal of all the Rishis was to realize: " I am that Brahm which is designated by the word Aum, whose essence is existence, intelligence and bliss, which is eternally free, all-pervading, all-illuming, and above all" (S. C. Bose's " Daily Practice of the Hindus"); and the interpretations of Sayana and Sankara are therefore in accordance with the philosophy of the latter, which aimed at the realization of man's unity with Brahm.

His Syndhya over, the Aryan dressed and worshipped the deities. He took his food twice a day, eating according to measure and taking nothing between meals. He did not, however, take his food before he had offered it to the gods, the rishis and the guests, and we read in the Gita: " The righteous who eat the remnant of sacrifice are freed from all sins, those who cook for themselves alone, eat sin itself" (III-13). Only such food as was not forbidden by the Sastras was enjoined to be eaten, and abstinence from food on days of the new and full moon was enjoined. Before taking meals a little water used to be sipped and the mouth and the feet washed and the dress changed. Food was to be taken with

restrained speech and without censuring the articles served. A remnant of food was always to be left for birds and reptiles. Two portions of the stomach were to be filled with food and one with water, leaving the fourth empty for passage of air. All evil habits, such as breaking clods of earth, tearing grass from under the feet, indulging in bodily or mental exertion in a state of fatigue, using improper seats or beds, riding vicious animals, climbing trees, laughing loud, making indecent or improper gestures, indulgence in excessive sleep or in the pleasures of the palate, were emphatically denounced. Adherence to truthfulness and a life of tranquillity and observance of a peaceful behaviour were enjoined. Avoidance of prying into others' secrets, association with the unrighteous or the disloyal and neglect of wives or servants or friends, even though the latter were sinful, were prohibited. Subjugation of all evil propensities for alcoholic stimulants, gambling, company of women of ill-fame and freedom from malice, were most strictly enjoined, not only in all the Smritis and the epics, but in medical works also. Charaka's dictum as to what is to be done, and what is to be avoided—is to "serve the good, to avoid the bad, to observe Brahmacharya, fasts and penances, to acquire a knowledge of the Sastras and realize their meaning, to shun company and love solitude, to have a distaste for objects of the senses, to make exertion for securing release, to possess fortitude, to avoid undue exertion and burn all actions which have been done in the fire of knowledge, to have no egotism, to see danger in company, to concentrate the mind and the intellect, to examine truth and to realize it." All these are declared by that ancient rishi to lead to that purification of the memory which secures permanent bliss.

"The man who is devoted to chastity, avoids wine and sexual indulgence, causes no pain to any one, does not tire himself out by exertion, is of a peaceful disposition, speaks sweet words, is devoted to duty, is pure in body, is of a firm, charitable and an ascetic disposition, worships the gods, the Brahmans, the cow, the preceptor, the teacher and the aged, is devoid of cruelty, is compassionate, awakes and sleeps at the proper hour, eats ghee and drinks milk daily, knows what ought to be done at a certain time and a certain place and the method of doing it, is free from self-conceit, observes the practices of the good, is devoted to one *Dharma*, waits upon those who know the science of the Atma, believes

in God, serves those who have brought their senses under control and is conversant with the Dharma Sastras, such a person has always the benefits of a Rasáyana (Elixir of life), without using (a medicinal) one. (Chikitsa sthana, Chapter I, verse II.)

Illustrations from practical life.

This was not merely an ideal but was realized in actual life, by kings like Yudhishthira and heroes like Krishna. "The king rose early in the morning and after performing his ablutions dressed in clean robes, and sitting towards the east with his hands joined together and following the path of the righteous, mentally said his prayers and then entered the chamber where a blazing fire was kept. There he performed his oblations to the fire (the Agnihotra), and then met Bráhmanas well read in the Vedas. They uttered in distinct voices agreeable benedictions, and the king made them presents of money, clarified butter, auspicious fruits, horses, cows, &c. He then touched various articles calculated to bring good fortune,--clarified butter, honey, *gorochana*, --and looked at floral garlands, waterpots, auspicious and well-decked maidens, and then entered his audience chamber." (Drona Parva, Chapter 81.) Krishna also did the same, and one morning when Yudhishthira, after he had been installed at Hastinapur, went to see him, he found him sitting rapt in yoga meditation, and the poet tells us: "He beheld Krishna of the hue of a blue cloud, sitting on a large sofa adorned with gold and gems. Attired in yellow silks and decked with celestial ornaments, his body blazed with splendour like a jewel set in gold. On his breast he wore the Kaustabha gem, and looked like the Udaya mountain decked with the rising sun. So beautiful did he appear that there was nothing to compare him with in the three worlds. Approaching him Yudhishthira asked him if he had passed the night happily, telling him that it was through his grace that they had been victorious in battle. But Krishna did not reply till his meditation was over." (Santi Parva, Chapter 46.) In another place we read of Krishna being waked at dawn by bands of choristers and sweet sounds of music. After rising from bed he went through the ordinary offices of nature, and taking a bath recited the sacred mantras, poured libations to the fire, dressed and worshipped the rising sun and made presents of gold and other things to Bráhmanas before going out on his mission.

Dress, houses and cities of ancient India.

The dress of that period was the ordinary *dhoti*, but probably not a *chadar* for the Kshatriyas, who wore short-sleeved jackets as we see in some ancient sculptures in India. They wore crowns (mukuta) on the head and decked themselves with ornaments. The Rishis clad themselves in barks and skins and wore clotted hair on the head. In the Rig Veda (I. 166 –10) we read of Maruts "holding in their manly arms many goodly things, gold chains on their chests, and glistening ornaments, and deer-skins on their shoulders." The dress of the women, as far as it can be known, was only one piece of cloth known as the *sári*. Palaces and well-built houses were common and gorgeous descriptions of these are met with both in the Vedas as well as in the epics. In the Rig Veda reference is made to kings sitting "in their supremest homes, the thousand pillared firmly based." (II, 41, 5.) But it is in the epics that the descriptions are most elaborate. Dasratha's capital, Ayodhya, is described as 12 yojanas in length and ten in breadth, abounding in spacious roads well laid out, full of shops stocked with all kinds of goods, containing stately edifices adorned with flags, and having theatres, gardens and mango-groves, enclosed by a wall and surrounded by a deep moat, inhabited by merchants from various countries, and adorned with mountain-like palaces, glittering with jewels, abounding in paddy and rice, and ever resounding with sounds of musical instruments. (Valmiki Rámáyana, I-5.) The description of Lanka Ravana's capital is even more gorgeous. It was "situated on the top of a mountain filled with splendid white palaces, surrounded by a golden wall, abounding in houses resembling cliffs of mountains, splendid highways and noble gateways, and walls guarded all round. The houses were seven or eight storied, studded with crystal and costly gems, the highways were well divided, and houses were joined together with ornamental arches. They were marked with the thunder-bolt and the hook." (Valmiki's Rámáyan Sundar Kunda, Chapter 2.) Yudhishthira's Sabha, as described by Vyasa, was as splendid. It was of great beauty, consisting of columns of gold and occupying an area of 5,000 cubits. It was so spacious, delightful and refreshing, composed of such excellent materials and furnished with such golden walls and archways, and adorned with so many varied pictures, that it surpassed in beauty the palace of Brahmá himself.

There was in it a peerless tank, full of fishes of golden hue and adorned with a staircase made of crystal. Its banks were overlaid with slabs of costly marble set with pearls, and round it were artificial woods, containing trees full of flowers emitting delicious fragrance. (Mahábhárata Sabha Parva, Chapter 3.) Inside the palace was a place built of such pure crystal that King Duryodhana once mistook it for a lake of water and drew up his clothes to the great amusement of the bystanders. In another place he mistook a lake of crystal for dry land and fell into it, exciting great laughter among his companions. Much of this is poetical, but it gives us a glimpse of the India of that period.

The state of the people in ancient India.

The epics also throw some light upon the state of the people in those days. There were no persons in Ayodhya "who were atheistical, or of a crooked mind, or given to lust or not having their senses under control, or unlettered, or unsightly, or who did not light the sacrificial fire,. or who did not perform sacrifices, or who engaged in improper occupations" "The Bráhmanas of that place were of subdued senses, always engaged in the performance of their own duties, freely giving away their money in charity and studying and receiving gifts with discrimination. None of them was atheistical or untruthful, or slenderly read in the Vedas, or addicted to slander, or incompetent or illiterate. There was no Bráhmana who was not versed in the Vedas or the Vedangas, or who did not observe his vows, who did not give away by thousands, or who was poor-spirited or of unsound mind or afflicted. And no man or woman was devoid of beauty or grace, or lacked reverence for their monarch. And the four orders with Bráhmanas at their head contained persons serving the gods and their guests, and endowed with gratitude, munificent, heroic, and possessed of prowess. And the men were long-lived and ever adhered to truth and duty, and lived in that best of cities, always surrounded by sons and grandsons and wives. The Kshatriyas were obedient to the Bráhmanas, the Vaishyas followed the Kshatriyas, and the Sudras, occupied with their proper vocations, ministered unto the three orders." (Valmiki Rámáyana Bálkánda, Chapter VI., verses 6 to 19.) Those who were outside the pale of Aryan civilization were also men of learning, and Ravana the King of Lanka, was as much known for his skill

in arms as proficiency in the Vedas, and his capital resounded every morning with the sound of Vedic hymns, sung by the learned. (Valmiki's Rámáyana Sundar Kanda).

Administration.—The administration of the various petty kingdoms into which the country was divided in ancient times, was conducted by kings assisted by a number of counsellors, generally seven. They were the governor of the citadel, the commander of the forces, the chief judge, the general inferior in command, the chief priest, the chief physician, and the chief astrologer. They were all required to be capable of "giving advice, ever intent upon the good of the king, learned yet modest, true to their word, never committing wrong either from passion or avarice, and adepts in their intercourse with the people." In addition to these the great rishis not only passed their time in contemplation, but also visited kings' courts, now rebuking the vicious and the foolish for their folly and vice, now comforting the distressed, now imparting the highest knowledge and now acting the part of public critics in the most fearless and outspoken manner. Fully aware of the temptations of power, they always cautioned kings against them. For instance, we find Narada asking Yudhishthira "if he was free from the fourteen vices of kings, *viz.*, atheism, untruthfulness, anger, incautiousness, procrastination, keeping evil company, idleness, restlessness of mind, taking counsel with only one man, consulting unwise persons or those unacquainted with the science of profit, abandonment of a settled plan, divulgence of counsels, unaccomplishment of beneficial projects and doing things without proper consideration, telling him that by these vices kings even firmly seated upon their thrones were ruined." (Sabhá Parva, Chapter 5.) Kings were great patrons of learning in those days and learned Bráhmanas were always mantained by the rajas who then ruled the country. Their courts were also resorted to by Bráhmanas and rishis of other portions of the country, and at all Yajnas the Bráhmanas engaged in discussions, making by well-chosen arguments "the worse appear the better reason," and "falling upon their opponents, like hawks darting at meat thrown out into the air." (Sabhá Parva, Chapter 36.) The people and the subordinate chiefs and vassals were always consulted by kings on important occasions, and the relations between the subject and the monarch were generally happy. Even in times of war, the rights

of the subject were scrupulously regarded and constant fights between the chiefs, did not affect the people. Change of rulers was common, but the people did not seem to feel it.

Sacrifices.—The number of sacrifices in those times, and the amount of wealth given away to Bráhmanas on such occasions, show that either the resources of the country must have been enormous or that the descriptions were of an ideal rather than an actual state of affairs. For instance, King Bharat performed a thousand sacrifices and a hundred Rájsuyas. In the sacrifice of King Dilipa the sacrificial stakes were made of gold. King Yayati built sacrificial altars upon the whole earth up to the sea shore, the distance of each after being measured by throwing logs of wood. King Gaya subsisted for a hundred years only upon the remains of sacrificial food, and, while he gave away his wealth, he prayed that he should have regard for only truth and virtue. Rantideva used to feed the Bráhmanas in vessels and plates of gold. In his palace a hundred thousand cattle used to be slaughtered every day, and, while feeding the guests, the cooks used never to say they had not enough. Sagara is said to have given to Bráhmanas mansions containing gold columns. King Prithu, after whom the earth is named Prithwi, gave unto Bráhmanas 21 piles of gold, each measuring 400 cubits. This may be a poetical exaggeration, yet there is this truth in it, that the kings of those days were very rich and could afford to make large and costly gifts to Bráhmanas. And yet even a sacrifice, accompanied with the costliest gifts, was not held to be equal to the sacrifice made by the poor of their hard-earned and paltry subsistence. In the Mahábhárata it is said that a Bráhmana, his wife, his son, and his son's wife, who had been starving for many days, at last got a *prastha* of barley. They pounded it and were going to eat when a guest entered their abode. The Bráhmana offered him his own share of barley, but the guest's hunger was not satisfied. His wife, son and daughter-in-law each then gave up his or her portion also, although they had had nothing to eat for so many days, preferring starvation to leaving a guest hungry. And it is said that it was the gift, made with a pure heart, of things acquired lawfully and given away with faith and devotion that secured all three a seat in heaven. It was not in the costliness of a sacrifice, but in the spirit in which it was performed, that the merit lay.

Food—The articles of food of those times were also fewer and simpler than of these days. The rishis of the Vedic and the Epic periods were flesh-eaters, and in the former Soma juice, the only intoxicating liquor known to the Aryans, was largely drunk In the Epic period flesh-meat began to be discarded, and in the Mahábhárata we read of Bhisma telling Yudhishthira that "though nothing upon earth was superior to flesh-meat in point of taste, or bringing strength to the weak or the development of the body, yet because it led to cruelty and wanton sacrifice of life, there was nothing meaner for man than to increase his own flesh by sacrificing the life of another living creature. There was not nor will there ever be a gift superior to the gift of life, and abstention from cruelty is the highest self-control, the highest gift, the highest penance, and equal in merit to all other sacrifices, gifts and ablutions in sacred waters. The use of animal food was therefore to be deprecated." (Anusasana Parva, Chapter 116.) In another place it is said: "Wine, fish, meat, honey, alcohol ... have been introduced by knaves. The hankering after these in sacrifices is due to error of judgment. The true Bráhmana realizes the presence of Vishnu in every sacrifice and sacrifices to him with agreeable preparations of milk, and fruits and flowers, and dedicates to him all worthy acts with a pure heart and with a knowledge accompanied with holiness." (Santi Parva Moksha Dharma, Chapter 255.)

Position of Women.—Such a condition of society could alone have produced women like Viswara, a lady of the family of Atri, who composed a hymn in honor of Agni, (Rig Veda V, 28,) or a Maitreyi, who received instructions in Brahmvidyá from Yajnavalkya, her husband. The wife was always reckoned as one of the 18 members of a sacrifice, and the dictum of Manu that "where women are honoured, there the gods rejoice, and where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, there dwells all prosperity" was not an ideal, but a description of an actual condition of society in India. All heroines of Indian epics—Sita, Sawitri, Draupadi, Sakuntala, Damayanti, &c.—were never helpless when placed in situations of difficulty; on the contrary, they were as strong in prosperity as in adversity. Draupadi declares that "the eternal virtue of a woman is based on devotion to her husband. The husband is the wife's god and

her refuge. Indeed, there is no other refuge for her." (Mahábhárata Vana Parva, Chapter 233, verse 37.) And yet, when occasion demanded it, she courageously assisted her husband with advice and managed his affairs in a way which will be creditable to the best superintendent of even the largest modern establishment According to her own account she had the charge of the whole of the enormous household of King Yudhishthra. There she had to feed every day *eight thousand* Bráhmanas in golden plates, and *eighty thousand Snataka* Bráhmanas with thirty attendants attached to each, and *ten thousand Yatis.* She had also the charge of a *hundred thousand maid-servants* whose names and dresses were all known to her, and of a hundred thousand elephants and horses, framing rules regarding them. She was fully aware of all the income and the expenditure of the kingdom, and took her onerous duty, cheerfully and out of love for her husband. (Mahábhárata Vana Parva, Chapter 233.) And yet, when placed under the direst adversity, she did not forget her duty and repulsed the advances of the evil-minded Jayadratha, king of Sauvira. Says Draupadi: "Well known as I am, I cannot demean myself before the King of Sauvira. I have not been false to my lord even in thought, so that by that merit I shall see thee dragged and vanquished by the sons of Prithá. Thou canst not, cruel as thou art, frighten me by seizing me by violence." (Vana Parva, Chapter 268, verses 21 and 22.) The charge of Kunti to her sons is even more forcible than that of the Spartan mother to her son: "The time has come for that for which a Kshatriya lady brings forth a son. They that are foremost among men never become cheerless when they incur hostilities" (Mahábhárata Udyoga Parva, Chapter 136) Women in those days not only appeared in public, but their advice was also sought for on matters of state, as was that of Gandhari on the eve of the proposed war between Kurus and Pandavas. The denunciation of women met in later writings is therefore due to a corrupt and not a healthy state of society.

The householder of ancient times.

The men of that period could not also be otherwise, and the Sastras tell us of householders devoted to the path of virtue and fully cognizant of their duties, attaining to the highest end of man even without relinquishing family life. For all high-

souled householders, heaven was ordained and the Sastras declare that by self-control a man easily acquired innumerable worlds. "What need has a man of restrained senses for a forest? Similarly, O Bhárata, what need of the forest is there to him who has no self-control? That is, a forest where a man of self-control dwells, and that is even a sacred asylum." (Mahábhárata Santi Parva, Chapter 150, verse 36.) The Aryan householder was enjoined not to destroy life, nor to appropriate what did not belong to him, nor to visit other people's wives. He was to avoid evil conversation, uttering harsh words, publishing other peoples' faults and speaking falsehood. He was not to covet the possessions of others, nor to do them any injury, nor to disregard the injunctions of the Vedas, nor to do evil by act, word, body or mind. He was to establish his own household fire, to keep a store of grain lasting for either three years, or one year, or for a day only, or not even that, the last being the most meritorious way of living. He was to cook no food for himself only, but to eat after he had sacrificed to the gods, fed all his guests, relations and servants (Vighasáshi). He was not to indulge in vice, to be chaste in and thought deed and not let anybody in his household remain unfed. He was not to eat more than twice a day, was to show due reverence to his father, mother and preceptor, to respect the wishes of his wife and children, to treat his relations with consideration, and to live peaceably in his family. Good conduct (*sad áchara*) was the key-note of the system and was declared to be the root of all prosperity, the prolonger of life, superior to all branches of knowledge, and the most efficacious mode of propitiating the deities, and it was said that no worship of God in the three worlds was equal to compassion for all creatures, friendly feelings towards all, charity and sweet words.

The five great sacrifices.

Every member of the twice-born classes performed his five great sacrifices (the pánch máhá yagya) in order to save himself from the five sins incidental to family life, the five *sunas*, or the places where animal life is sacrificed, *viz.*, the mill, the fire-place, the broom, the pestle and the mortar, and the water-place. These five sacrifices consisted of (1) reading and teaching the Vedas called the Brahmayagya, (2) oblations to the forefathers, called the Pitriyagya, (3) sacrifices to the gods, called the Devayagya, (4)

distribution of food to living creatures, called the Bhútayagya, and (5) the feeding of the guests, called the Manushyagya.

How vastly different its now-a-days. The first of these sacrifices is either not known or properly performed by many of the members of the first, second and third orders, and where it is performed it is simply in the shape of the Sandhyá, accompanied now and then with reading a portion of the Sastra, except where a Bráhmana has pupils to teach. The Pitriyagya is performed mostly at the *pitripaksha* in the month of Aswin. Sacrifice to the gods has now given place to throwing a little food in the fire before commencing the morning meal, while the *Athitiyagaya* is performed by feeding guests, if any happen to be in the house, and not by giving food to chance-droppers before taking one's meal.

Contrast between the old and the new mode of life in India.

Contrasted with the old how artificial and how devoid of faith and love is the new mode of life in India! Among Bráhmanas there is either an absence of learning or piety or even both. Among Kshatriyas there is generally little or no disposition to perform their duty in life. Among the Vaishyas, who have benefited most by the present condition of things, there is generally a disposition to waste their wealth in unmeaning shows and pomp, and want of realization of the true meaning and object of charity. The artizan class is gradually declining under foreign competition. The great industries of the country which once made it famous throughout the world, are all going. The agriculturist has now to face a famine even every five or at the utmost ten years Population has increased without any increase in the people's means of subsistence. Old wants have not only increased, but many new and artificial ones have been created. Indulgence in articles of food and drink which are entirely unsuited to Indian constitutions, and adoption of foreign manners and foreign dress, are even more popular among the Hindus of to-day than among their predecessors a few years ago. Diseases and vices which were quite unknown to our predecessors, even in the immediate past, not to speak of the remoter periods, are cutting off the flower of the nation in its prime and amidst its career of usefulness. The higher classes, blessed with education, wealth or power, not only show little or no sympathy to ameliorate the condition of their poorer brethren, but hold themselves

aloof in a manner which is sometimes worse than that of even some foreigners. Litigation is being indulged in as a pastime as if people had nothing better to do. Religion is being followed more as a matter of form than in the spirit in which it was followed in ancient or mediæval India. Not content with 33 millions of gods, there are parts of the country where Mahommedan fakirs and even low caste people, have come to be worshipped as saints. The gods of the Hindu tribe command less worship than *Sitla* and *Panch Pir*. All this is due to ignorance both among men as well as women. The statistics of the last census show that out of every 10,000 persons only 692 in Bengal, 1,028 in Madras, 830 in Bombay, 541 in Punjab and 437 in the United Provinces were literate. Education of women has made some, but not much progress of late years, and it was found that in Bengal one woman out of 200 was able to read and write against one male in every ten. In the United Provinces it was found that for every 10,000 males, only 393 females could read and write. Another noticeable feature presented by the statistics of education is that, the Brahmin caste which used to stand foremost in point of education is now being outstripped in the race in some parts of the country by castes whom it used to look down upon. The Kayasthas, the Jains and the Vaishyas are everywhere coming to the front as against Brahmins. It is this want of education which has resulted in the present condition of our society, and yet degenerated as it is, it will even now compare favourably in many respects with other societies of the world in point of simplicity and sobriety, peacefulness of disposition, and regard for law and authority. The ordinary Hindu who firmly believes in the law of *Karma*, and to whom future life is a matter of more immediate concern than present enjoyment, will not do things which those to whom the world is a reality, do." Says Valmiki. "He, O Rama, only lives who lives for others. Truth, duty, energy, charity, sweetness, service of the twice-born, the gods and guests are the path of heaven, so have the good declared." (Rámáyan Ayodhya Kanda, Chapter 109.) Thoughts like these are still powerful with our people. Their religion may, as it usually is, be based upon superstition, but they are better than those whose religion is confined to present enjoyment. The shopkeeper or the husbandman who repeats the name of his favourite deity in the morning, goes to bathe in the nearest tank,

river or well, offers oblations of water to the sun, worships *Siva* and *Vishnu* in the temples, hears the Rámáyana or the Bhagwata or the Satyanarayan Katha, observes the fasts and feasts of the Hindu calendar, and feeds and gives charity to Brahmins as occasion requires, may be a very superstitious creature, but is a better Hindu than one whose sole care is personal comfort.

The traditions, under which our women are brought up, have also largely contributed to make them more pious, more devoted to their husbands, and more self-sacrificing than women of more civilized countries. We have no divorce suits nor disputes between husband and wife worth the name. Even among women of the lower classes sobriety of conduct is the rule, not the exception. It is very necessary to extend the sphere of education, and all round to broaden the basis of religion and purge it of superstition and dogma; but to decry everything Indian in favour of foreign methods, create artificial wants and desires among our people, and foster distaste for our own institutions, as has been done in some parts of India, cannot but be disastrous.

Causes of decay of Indian Civilization.

The Mahábhárata marked a turning point in not only our political, but also in our social history, and while according to popular belief the Kaliyuga (the age of unrighteousness) set in on its close, the disappearance of the great Rishis and warriors who could guide the nation aright, is patent to those who give no credence to popular tradition. Ignorance and superstition have since been greatly on the increase, both among the priesthood and the laity. Sectarianism has taken the place of true religion, and it required a Buddha to give it a fresh impulse towards truth and righteousness. The accounts of the courts of Chandragupta and Asoka, left to us by Greek and other writers, show that the country once again resumed its prosperous condition. The bravery of the Indians won the admiration of the Greeks. Their accounts show that there were 1,500 towns round the Bias in the Punjab. People did not take money on occasions of marriage. The Swayambara was in vogue as in the epic period, and so greatly was learning prized in India, that people flocked to its universities for higher study. Local self-government and village autonomy were common. The roads and the fields were all well kept, and people lived comparatively simple and truthful

lives. There was no litigation nor written contracts, and famines were rare. The arts of life were in a flourishing condition, and people used to wear fine muslin dresses, embroidered with gold and silver threads.

This was up to 300 B.C. Then came Asoka, who ruled his subjects like the few great rulers whom India has produced. His dominions extended up to Nepal, Cashmere, Swat, Scindh, Bilochistan, and parts of Afghanistan. The king was all-powerful, but his despotism was tempered with wisdom and mercy. The country was divided in four divisions, each under a governor appointed by the king. Below him were certain officers called Rajuks, corresponding to commissioners. Below the Rajuks were district officers, called the mahamatras, and below them were certain instructors of religion, called the dharma mahamatras. The army was managed by departments regularly organized, and properly supervised. The king took a fourth of the produce of the land as land-tax. His capital, Patliputra, was 9 miles long and 11 broad. It was surrounded by a wooden wall, sixty-four gateways and five hundred and seventy watch-towers with a deep moat around. The government of the city was entrusted to six departments, each composed of five persons. The first looked after trades and manufactures, the second, after the wants of visitors to the town, the third, after births and deaths, the fourth, after commerce and weights and measures, the fifth, after the artizans, and the sixth, after the collection of taxes. The language of the period was the Prakrita, and the accounts of Asoka's reign which have come down to us, prove that the people regained some, if not much, of their former vigor and truthfulness.

The period which followed may be said to be the darkest in the history of India. But even then kings, like Vikramaditya and Bhoja, kept the country from sinking down lower in the scale of civilization. This is the period of sectarianism, worship of many gods and goddesses, and exaltation of one deity at the expense of others. Many of the ideas of the Vedic and the Smriti periods did even then continue to be current among the people in influencing their lives and conduct. But that healthy regard for truth, that love of duty, that recognition of merit, which we find in the former two periods, do not meet us here. Fasts,

penances, pilgrimages, assertion of claims of birth on the part of Brahmans, and decline of learning seem to be common. And yet so great was the inherent vitality of the nation, that some of the most honoured writers in Sanskrit literature flourished during this period. In this period the well-known medical works of Charaka and Sustrata, the Surya Sidhanta of Varahmira, the Brahma Sphuta Sidhanta of Brahma Gupta and Bhaskaracharya's Sidhantasiromani were also written. The names of Kalidass and Bharvi among poets and dramatists, and Amar Singh among lexicographers, are too well known to need description. It was during this period that Sankara, the well-known expounder of Adwaitism, flourished, and once more infused life into Hinduism. What is, however, remarkable in it is, that the Brahmans were allowed to usurp all liberty of thought and conscience, and the laity became their dependents in matters of faith. The condition of the country, as gathered from the Puranas and the dramas, as well as accounts of foreign travellers, show that places like Ujain, Mathura, and Kanauj were large centres of trade or learning. Female education was common. The country abounded in riches, and people lent money even to kings. The houses of the rich had high gateways painted and decorated with garlands. They had several courtyards, each reserved for a different purpose. The administration of justice was according to the code of Manu, though it was not always pure, and injustice was done from fear of the rich and the powerful. Benares, Somnath, Thanesar, and Pushkar were the most popular places of pilgrimage. The festivals observed among the people were the Nrirjali Ekadasi, the Janam Ashtami, the Sivaratri and the Diwali. People divided their income in three shares, out of which, after payment of public charges, one was kept in reserve, one was invested in trade, and out of the remainder, after setting apart 1/9th, for charity, the rest was spent upon personal wants. Widow-marriage was not in vogue and *satti* was common. Sea voyages were less frequent. Astrology and fortune-telling were popular, and people were fond of running after the elixir of life. This was the period of India's decline which may be said to run from Vikramaditya to the Mohamedan invasion. After that we have a period of greater darkness in which the Hindus were much repressed, but even then they did not fail to assert themselves as occasion

required. The arts of life had greatly declined among them. But religion and philosophy never left their hold upon the nation and kept its dying spirit alive amidst persecution and repression.

The Vanprastha and the Sanyasa.—Having passed the second portion of his life as a householder, the Aryan retired from active life to seek union with Brahm. When he found his body declining, and his hair turning grey, his sons and grandsons settled in life, he betook himself to the third *Asrama*, known as the Vanprastha. He did not leave his household fires, nor his sacrifice to the gods, but made his vows of abstemiousness stricter, eating only once a day what remained after feeding his guests, living upon vegetables and wild grains, exposing himself to heat and cold, sleeping on the bare earth, and owning no other furniture except a mat of grass. Thus, gradually lessening his wants, he learnt to sacrifice personal ease and comfort till, in the fourth period of his life, *viz.*, from the age of 75 to 100, he was ready to adopt the *Sanyasa* (renunciation) with which his true life was said to commence. The life of a Sanyasin was the goal of the best intellects of the country in the palmiest days of its civilization, and Vyasa, Vashishtha, Narada, Yagyvalkya, Paraśara, Suka, Sankara and others who have left their mark upon Indian thought, were all *Sanyasins*. Bhishma the great Kuru warrior, Krishna the hero of the Mahábhárata, Janaka and others who ruled kingdoms, made wars, led armies or acted as guides to kings and chiefs, were also in reality, though not outwardly, life-long Sanyasins. Some adopted Sanyasa after they had done their work in life, others did so from their earliest years. Unattached to all objects of the world, finding his pleasure within himself, relinquishing every kind of work, which was in the least calculated to distract his mind—having pledged the vow of harmlessness to all creatures, divested of desire, free from delusion, giving up even his sacred thread and his love of study, eating little and that also once a day, without any fixed habitation, clad in rags, living in perfect solitude, entering a village only once for the purpose of begging food, indifferent to praise and blame, the Aryan in the last portion of life waited for death, like a servant, awaiting the command of his Master. Even then he was a true Bráhmana. This is the dictum of the Sastras. "The gods," it was said in the Mahábhárata, "know him to be a

(a) In Ancient India.

true Bráhmana who can make a spot, teeming with thousands, appear to him to be perfectly solitary and unoccupied. He who succeeds in beholding in the soul that resides in the body, that foremost of Beings who is not attached to earth, who is immeasureable even in the measureless firmament, who pervades all, in which is set the wheel of time, who is the cause of all this universe, of such a person the condition cannot be known by others just as the course of a bird flying in the air." This ideal the Rishis of old declared to be unattainable by work, however highly meritorious. "The man that is destitute of knowledge, whether he pours *homa* (oblations) or performs sacrifices, can never, by work, attain to emancipation. Nor can he enjoy any great happiness in the end. Restraining all the external senses and alone, one should therefore seek to know Brahm. Giving up work one should not exert even mentally." Self-restraint, renunciation and knowledge were the Rishis' three doors to the temple of emancipation. To the emancipated this transitory world was rightly declared by them to be incapable of giving joy or sorrow, nor had birth, death and even emancipation, any meaning for those who had attained the *Swarajya*, the empire of self. The ideal, though difficult, was not unattainable, as Indian history abundantly shows. Kings sacrificed their most cherished possessions for it. Householders relinquished all that was near and dear to them, not for an *ignis-fatuus*, nor for the purpose of mistaking the illusions of their own minds for union with Brahm. On the contrary, they felt that only in cutting off the knot of desire which bound them to the world, lay the road to eternal happiness. Hard as the battle of spiritual discipline was to fight, the Indians of old fought it manfully, alone and single-handed, knowing that if they lost it they were doomed for ever.

(*b*) In Modern India.

In modern India, the Vânprastha and the Sanyâsa do not form two distinct modes of life, but run into each other. They have both have greatly departed from their pristine purity, yet the tendency of the nation has always been towards a life of ascetic, and self-denial. To the Hindu this is the only means of release from a world of sorrow and trouble, and even now men who have set before them, and are steadily pursuing the ideal set forth in the Sastras, are not wanting. Their aim

is to see themselves in all things and all things in themselves, and destroy all sense of difference and separation. Some of them are men of not only the highest culture, but also of the loftiest character and most earnest seekers of Brahm. I need only mention the instance of the late Swami Bhaskaranand of Benares, who died in August 1899 at the age of about 70, and whose death was so universally regretted by not only natives, but by some of the Anglo-Indian community also. The Swami was born in a Bráhmana family in the Cawnpore district, and retired from the world at the age of eighteen as soon as a son was born to him. He then travelled throughout India, and finally settled in Benares where he lived for many years, devoting himself to doing all possible good to those who visited him, receiving every one without distinction of color or creed with equal kindness, and yet setting an example of the most rigid asceticism, combined with the greatest unselfishness. His asylum was the resort of all tourists both from India and foreign countries, and he was known not only as the holy man of Benares, but also as one of the highest and the best of natives. Householders, princes and chiefs, as well as men who have received the highest education of modern times, derived as much pleasure and found as great solace in his company as the recluse and the mendicant. Though not very learned, he had the clearest ideas on all subjects of religion and philosophy. But, above all, was the example he set of suffering manfully the vicissitudes of life, and what is known as the pair of opposites in the Sastras, that earned for him the respect of all who met him. Without even a blanket to shelter him from cold, with barely a mat to sleep upon, with not even a *kamandalu* (bowl) to drink water from, or a rag on his person, Bhaskaranand was as cheerful as ever, always having a kind word for every one who went to see him. His views were of the most catholic description. He did not, for instance, agree with Sankara in thinking Sudras to be disqualified from reading the Brahmavidya, for the Sastras never recognize such a distinction. With tears in his eyes he used to repeat that well-known verse of the Yoga-vashishtha, where Rama tells Vashishtha that though not sold to any one, we are yet sold as slaves to our own desires, and though knowing all this to be false, are yet blinded by illusion. People ascribed to him miraculous powers (*Siddhis*), but he repudiated them, and declared the greatest *Siddhi* to lie in the true performance of

duty. His disciples, among whom are some of the best men of India, have built temples in his memory; indeed, he was an object of worship in temples even in his lifetime, which is seldom the case with any Sanyasin now-a-days. But it is the record of a pure and noble life, a life devoted to the most earnest realization of truth, which will ever live in the hearts of all who knew him.

Among the unorthodox sects also, Sanyasa seems to flourish in real vigour. Among the Udasis and the Nirmalas of the Punjab will be found not only men of the highest culture, but of the greatest self-denial, and capacity for suffering also. Sound knowledge of Hindu religious philosophy is becoming more common among them than even among the orthodox school, and up in the Himalayas will be found many a recluse, passing his days in peaceful calmness, reminding one of the *rishis* of ancient India. But unfortunately for the country a vast amount of counterfeit article is now passing for the genuine, and men whose only claim to recognition is their ochre-coloured clothes or their verbal utterance of Vedantic formulæ, live and fatten at the expense of the community. At the last *Kumbh* fair in Hardwar, where members of all religious sects assembled in large numbers, it was found with pain and disappointment, that those who were the loudest in preaching self-denial, were the keenest in practising self-indulgence, often of the lowest sort. Lust and lucre were decried in theory and cherished in practice. Costly feasts, showy equipages, and large and well ordered establishments, were the most common amongst some of the most eloquent preachers of renunciation. In one place a number of lads without any pretension to learning, and who ought to have been at their ploughs, were in the course of one night invested with the sacred thread, absolved from their vows of studentship and initiated into Sanyasa, to feed upon the community. India instead of being the land of well directed charity, has now become the land of beggars. At the last census some fifty lacs of people or 167 in 10,000 were returned as beggars, and the question naturally arises, whether such a large number of people, who live at the expense of others, can be conducive to the well-being of the community. That most of them are stout and well fed, and live in a style in which the ordinary Hindu householder can never pretend to do, goes without saying. At Hardwar grand feasts were given by these *Sadhus* for months together to the members of their own fraternity,

the dishes served being in all cases not the beggars' simple meal, but such as even a well-to-do Indian can seldom afford to eat. All this was done from money contributed by the pious and the charitable among the Hindus, and in this way thousands of rupees are collected and wasted upon shows on such occasions. That it is a gross abuse of an otherwise noble system of suffering, and renunciation, is admitted, even by the more sensible members of these orders, but when asked for a remedy they are unable to suggest any. Some people think that a law declaring it unlawful for a minor under 18 years of age to be enrolled as a mendicant, and making the person who enrolls or receives him as such, liable as an abettor, will greatly minimize the evil. But I am afraid Hindu public opinion will be found to be greatly opposed to it. On the other hand, it may be made an engine of oppression against even those who take genuine students as mendicant Brahmacharins. It has also been suggested that were many of these beggars put in work-houses as is done in other countries, the inducement to a life of mendicancy will become much less. I do not, however, think that a poor law is at all needed for India. Even in countries where it is in force, it has not been successful in stopping idleness and vice. India is not the land of organized charity, and it would be doing violence to time-honoured tradition were we to stop the spring of private charity from running in the way it has always flowed here. The abuses of the present system can, on the contrary, be more easily remedied by enlisting public opinion on our side and convincing the people of the necessity of showing greater discrimination in bestowing their charity and pointing out the evil of indiscriminately throwing away their money upon the undeserving. Let them but observe the good old rule of the Sastras of not letting a Sanyasin touch money and honouring the good and pious with only gifts of food and clothing, and the number of beggars will soon be reduced. In my visit to Badrinath last year, I noticed parties of Nagas going from stage to stage and extorting money from shopkeepers in the name of charity, and maltreating those who did not comply with their demands. It was proposed that the visits of beggars like these should be stopped or regulated by passes issued at convenient centres in India, and that those who could not afford to pay their way up, should not be allowed to go. But the pro-

posal was received with strong disfavor by the leaders of the community and had to be dropped. The Census Commissioner tells us in his report that there were 6½ per cent. fewer of beggars in this census than at the previous one. And he attributes it partly "to the spread of education and consequently the weaker hold which the so-called ascetics have on the imaginations of the people, and that it is much less easy than it was formerly for the members of the various begging fraternities to unloose the purse-strings of the villagers." (Census Report for India, page 216.) This is partly true, but only of those among whom education has made some progress. The mass of people, especially the women, are still under the influence of the belief that one with a colored cloth, is capable of securing a seat in heaven and therefore worship him.

With the spread of better and sounder ideas of religion and the duties of those who wear the cloth, purse-strings of our people will become more tight; but this is for the Hindus themselves to do. Sad it is to see how even the leaders of these fraternities abuse their privileges. At the last *Kumbh* a pious householder once asked the leader of the Dandin Sanyasins to a feast. He was told that the great sadhu will honour his abode with some 400 of his disciples. He made preparations for the feast, but found to his surprise the number of disciples having suddenly risen in one night to 800. And yet this sadhu was looked upon as head of the Sanyasins. The invitation was cancelled to the chagrin of the great man, and it was some satisfaction to see men of his own order telling him that he only got what he deserved. It is not implied that there are no good men and true among the Dandins or the other orders of Sanyasins now-a-days. I know of many among all sections of these fraternities, and have always derived much benefit in their company. But they are unfortunately getting rare, and because the bad preponderate, the good keep themselves steadily aloof, and thus deprive both the laity as well as their own brethren of the good their presence might otherwise do.

IV.—THE SRADDHA.

(*a*) **In Ancient Times.**

THE last great institution of Hindu society, both ancient and modern, is the Sraddha, or oblations in honour of the departed. Such rites were common in other nations of antiquity also, but it is their elaborate character that constitutes their distinguishing feature in India. The word *Sraddha* is not found in the Vedas. It is met with largely in Manu and the Grihya Sutras, and the Vedic mantras recited at it are those which are recited for oblations of water (*tarpana*) to the forefathers. These mantras are: "Those of our forefathers who are yet in this world, those who are in the middle regions, and those who deserve to drink amrita, may they all go to the higher regions. Those of the fathers who have assumed the form of prána (vital air), may they be purified, and may the fathers who are cognizant of truth, protect us in the aváhana (invocation). May those of our fathers who have just gone, and who deserve to drink the amrita, may those who are descendants of Angiras or Bhrigu, guide our intellect aright. May our fathers who are worthy of drinking the Soma juice, and who follow the rites enjoined in the Vedas and the Smritis, may they come by the path of the gods to this sacrifice, may they be satisfied with the Swadhá, may they bless and protect me. O Amrita, thou that art produced from the nectar of flowers, O corn and clarified buter, which destroy all diseases and remove all obstacles, O waters which carry off the three humours, may you be *havi* to my fathers, may you give them satisfaction. Swadhá and Salutation to those of the fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers who have partaken of the Swadhá food. The fathers become pleased after eating and drinking. May they satisfy me by giving me desired blessings. O fathers, be you purified by washing your hands. Fathers who are living in this world with bodies, those who are not living here, those whom we know or those whom we do not know, Thou knowest them, O Jatvedas (fire), do thou make them partake of the sacred Swadhá. May the wind carry off honey, may it flow in the rivers, and may herbs produce it. May the night be sweet as honey, may the morning be sweet as honey, may the particles of earth be sweet as honey, may heaven, the father of us all, be sweet as honey. May the lord of the herbs be

sweet to me, may the sun be sweet to me, may our cows yield milk sweet as honey. Salutations to the spring which belongs to the fathers, to the summer, to the rainy season, to the *sarada* (the autumn), to the *hementa* and the *sisira* (the cold season). Salutations to you, O Pitris, give us families. We give you coverings, your covering is a thread, do you wear it."

These mantras do not justify the opinion entertained by some European writers that the Aryans "conceived of the souls of the dead neither as immortal nor as divine, but as dependent for their sustenance on human ministrations which are rendered more in fear than in affection, and are colored throughout by the desire to deter these unwelcome guests from visiting the abode of the living." No doubt after a Sraddha, as now performed, the ancestors are asked to return to their habitations, and the ground where it is performed is swept off. But the very basis of the Sraddha in Hindu society is belief in the immortality of the soul, and every article offered at such ceremonies is offered in the belief that the person in whose name it is offered gets, or enjoys its use in the next world. Regions of the *manes* (Pitrilokas) are spoken of and recognised throughout by the Hindu Sastras as places where the souls of the departed dwell. Those regions are said to be happier than those of the earth, and the souls of the good live there so long as the good *karma* which takes them there, lasts. After death, for a stated period (generally one year), the soul of the deceased is believed to be hovering on earth dependent upon the oblations given by those near and dear to it for assumption of a body fit for the *pitriloka*. But after the year is over, it goes to the regions reserved for it. The offerings are, moreover, always offerings of love, not fear, and the very etymology of the word *Sraddha* signifies that which is given with faith (श्रद्धया दीयते.)

The value of the *Sraddha* lies more in the good thought which its performer sends forth, than in the articles he offers, and the Mantras no more sanction the worship of the father, the mother and other living ancestors only, as some reformers in India think, than they do the costly gifts of dresses, jewellery and almost every conceivable article of household furniture. All that they intend is the invocation of the living and the dead in sacrifice, in token of love and affection. The institution owes its origin to the wish of men to live in heaven with the gods and not to be left behind as they had been. In the Mahábhárata it is

said that one Nimi, son of Dattatreya of Atri's race, happened to lose a son. He conceived the idea of a Sraddha in his memory and got together and fed a number of Bráhmanas and offered cakes and sesamum seed to his son. But the rishi became filled with grief and thought he had done something not sanctioned by the Vedas, till he was assured that he had performed a sacrifice in honour of the Pitris. (Anusasana Parva, Chapter 91.) Thenceforward the Sraddha became an institution of Aryan society. But whatever be its origin, its object is only to remind us of those to whom we owe our existence in the world, and the gifts we make at it, are intended as a loving tribute to their memory, serving at the same time as a means of encouragement of learning and piety. The Mahábhárata therefore forcibly enjoins that gifts on such occasions should only be made to "persons who are conversant with the Vedas, the Dharmasastras, the Puranas, the Bhashyas, and the rules of grammar, who act up to the standard laid down in the *Sastras*, who are conversant with the religion of emancipation and who are devoted to truth and to the practices of yoga." It is also said that "a man of intelligence should examine the Bráhmanas who are invited to a Sraddha as to their intelligence, appearance, birth, conduct, age and learning, and that the merit of feeding thousands of false Bráhmanas is equal to that of feeding only one Bráhmana who is versed in the Sastras." (Mahábhárata Anusasana Parva, Chapter 90.) Modern Hindu society cannot therefore do better than revert to the system inculcated by the Rishis of old and save not only its own money, but also put a stop to that premium to vice, which its present indiscriminate system of charitable gifts at places where Sraddha is usually performed, *viz.*, Gaya, Kashi, Prayag, &c., sometimes affords.

V.—REFORMS NECESSARY.

From this brief sketch of some of our chief institutions, it will be seen that our society is not dead, but requires new life to be infused into it, to enable it to rise to the level of modern societies in other progressive countries, as well as to make a nearer approach to its own ideals in the past.

Ancient India was essentially the land of the Brahmins, and after them of the Kshatriyas. The Vaishyas and the Sudras were of little account. The times have, however, now so vastly changed

that the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas, at least in Upper India, no longer form the hierarchy of intellect or power in the country, and if they continue to be what they are, they cannot hope to retain even the little they have got of power or position. It is no use shutting our eyes to proved facts, or to defend institutions which cannot be defended. If the Brahmins of the past made India what it was and have left us noble ideals to follow, let their descendants also place themselves in the van-guard of progress, and they will get the leadership of the nation as Drona did of the hosts of Duryodhana. In the same way if Sanyasins, like Sankara or Sukara, have left for us noble religious ideals to follow, their successors who delight in their *maths* and paraphernalia of royalty shall have, like them, to go and work among the people, and show in life a noble ideal of duty, before they can expect the present Indian public to maintain them in their present ease and comfort. The past should teach us not only the lesson of what to adopt from its institutions, but also what to avoid.

It tells us to adopt the old ideal of charity, love of duty, truthfulness and simplicity to new conditions, while it tells us to avoid that distaste for manual labour, that neglect of arts and manufactures, that absence of a spirit of enterprize which has brought the country to its present level. No reformer can be a true son of India who fails to keep both these steadily in view. "It is wrong to say there is no hope of regeneration for India. The situation, though it seems disheartening, is not altogether so hopeless as some pessimists think it to be. There is yet life in the nation; only it requires to be regulated and guided in the proper channel. This depends upon how our public men act in the present. Now or never should be their motto. The choice hitherto has been between attachment to ruinous customs and a headlong rush after ideals which may also prove our ruin. What the country requires is, brave, clean hearts, fired with enthusiasm for all that is good and noble. If the result of so much activity is not a thousand, not even a hundred of such hearts, the sooner we retrace our steps the better." *

That there has been of late a great upheaval of the Indian mind, is undoubted, but whether it is in the proper direction, is questioned by many whose opinions are entitled to respect. The

* Reform Movements in India—by the Author.

old order cannot last. It must be modified to suit the changing circumstances of our society. Our ancient ideals will have to be kept up, but if we are to take the place which should belong to us in modern civilized society, they will have to be adapted to the times. Our religion and philosophy are now being largely studied in the West, and the influence they are exercising on the thought of western countries is very considerable. But in the West they know what is good in our past and what is not; what is practicable and what otherwise. We shall have to do the same. Our past is great, but the greatness of the past will not make us great, unless we resolve to be like those whose purity of life and steadiness of aims and loftiness of ideals made them achieve it. Not to move at all and merely sit, admiring the past, means death; to rush headlong into change in disregard of the past, means ruin. To choose the mean between these two extremes means regeneration for India, and this ought to be the direction in which all reform ought to move.

The whole question is more of social and economic than of religious reform. This has been the aim of all reformers in India, and each and all of them have tried to lift society up from superstition, dogma, priest-craft and trammels of caste. The modern Indian reformer shall also have to follow the same route. For instance, we have seen that the life of the student in ancient India was marked by strict observance of the vow of chastity. The same ought also to be the case now. Marriage should now, as it was in those days, be postponed till the Indian youth is capable of taking care of a family. There was then no extravagance in marriages, nor indulgence in shows as it is now, and a return to ancient methods in this respect will be productive of undoubted advantage. Women were then, and ought also to be now, educated. The Hindus of those times had fewer wants than their descendants of these days. They were not so mindful of personal ease or comfort as of their duties to society. Why should the same not be the case now also? Valmiki has said : "For those who live upon their lawful earnings and are devoted to their own spouses, who are self-controlled, and are dear to their guests, there is emancipation even in the midst of a family." This should be laid to heart by all modern Hindus. We cannot revive the Aswamedha or the Rajsuya sacrifices prevalent in the Vedic times, nor the

eight forms of marriages, nor the various kinds of sons mentioned by Manu or other Smriti writers. But we can usefully revive their rules about marrying at a proper age, bestowing gifts upon the worthy and every one having a thorough knowledge of the principles of his religion and his duties in life, as well as being less exclusive on account of caste or family prejudices.

Common Ideals and Common Language.

Above all, it is necessary to have common ideals with a common national language. Sanskrit was the spoken language of the higher and *prakrita* of the lower classes of Aryans. The various Indian vernaculars were apparently not in existence in ancient India. They cannot, however, be wiped off now. But they can be vastly improved, and the best and the most authentic teachings of Hinduism brought home to the people through their medium. The question of a universal medium of expression is, it is true, one of great difficulty in a country like India. English can not be such medium, because it not only fails to express the higher phases of Indian religious and philosophic thought, but has even now permeated only 64 out of 10,000 of the Hindu population, while the various vernaculars are not understood outside their own province, or by people who are trained to speak them in their infancy. It is otherwise with Hindi or Hindustani with whatever name it may be called. It is even now the *lingua franca* of India, and is understood by almost every one in every part of India. More than fifty millions of people have returned it as their spoken or written vernacular. But even those who speak the other dialects have no difficulty in understanding it. It is being improved, and ought soon to take its place among the more progressive languages of India as a medium expression of literary and scientific thought. A common language, with common ideals, and common aims shall soon make the country what it ought to be, and this is what is required now-a-days.

High ideal in life is the great want of India of to-day. In European countries, people have generally some ideal in life to approach to, whether it be public good or gratification of higher ambition, and the story of the soldier who used to say, "I will be Marshal of France," and lived to be one, or of the spendthrift who having lost his vast estate, determined to regain it and lived to do so, is well known. Their Carnagies, Rockfellers, Cecil Rhodes

furnish illustrations of what men fired by ambition can do both for themselves and their fellows. But here, in India, nine out of every ten men even, among the educated, will not be able to say definitely what their aim in life is. In ancient India it was not so, and both rishis and rajas had some higher object in life than the mere gratification of personal wants. Truth (satya) and duty (dharma), the good old rule of not doing to others what was disagreeable to one's own self, was held up as the ideal by the sages of those times and many tried to live it. And because we have lost that ideal, that we present the spectacle of a people rent asunder by mutual dissensions, divided into thousands of castes and sub-castes, sects and sub-sects, with all spirit of nationality crushed out, weak in body and mind, and slaves of circumstances. So vastly different is the India of to-day from the India of the past, that it is doubted by many if we ever had the ideals we find in our Sastras. And yet they are there. The only course possible, therefore, is to try and make some approach to them. As Professor James says in his "Varieties of Religious Experience," pages 272—274, "it is by making the spiritual emotion the centre of personal energy, by having a feeling of a wider life than that of this world's selfish little interests, by a conviction of not merely an intellectual, but as it were of personal presence of an Ideal power, a sense of the friendly continuity of such power with our own life and a willing self-surrender to it, by a shifting of the emotional centre towards loving and harmonious affections, towards 'yes,' 'yes,' and away from 'no,' where the claims of the nonego are concerned, that true saintliness can be acquired. Such a saintliness shows itself in a feeling of positive pleasure, in sacrifice and asceticism, measuring, as it does, the degree of one's loyalty to the higher power, in strength of the soul where personal motives and inhibitions commonly omnipotent, become too insignificant for notice and new reaches of patience and fortitude open out, where fears and anxieties go and blissful equanimity takes their place, where with the accession of purity, comes the imperative necessity of cleansing of existence from all that is brutal and sensual in it, and where with the shifting of the emotional centre come charity, tenderness for fellow-creatures, and where the ordinary motives to antipathy which set such close bonds to tenderness among human beings

are inhibited." This is nothing but the karma yoga of India and those who have followed it, have left examples to serve in all times and circumstances. In proportion as we open ourselves to the in-flow of the Divine Life, and recognize that Life to be the life of all, that we realize the fact that harm to one means harm to all and good of one, the good of all. And it is because ours is now a fractional and not a whole life, that we are not happy. The wisest and the best in all times and circumstances have recognized the necessity of a high ideal in life, and to many it has been more an impersonal than a personal one, the realization of the living presence of an unseen power, call it God or by any other name you will. But where personal ideals have been resorted to, they have also been those who have set before the world the noble example of self-sacrifice, whether it be for the good of their nation or of humanity at large. If therefore we are to have high ideals, and that such ideals are absolutely necessary, is what I feel convinced of, we may have them in the shape of devotion to duty and truth, or in the shape of those who lived the life of truth and duty. The history of India furnishes many such examples in its heroes, like Bhisma and Hanuman, in its kings like Janaka, Yudhishthira and Vikrama, in its avatars like Rama, Krishna and Buddha, in its rishis like Vashishtha, Vyasa, Suka, in its reformers like Sankara, Nanak, and Kabira, in its devotees like Tulsidass, Tukaram, Ramkrishna, and in its modern men like Rammohan Rae, Ishwarchandar Vidyasagar, Ranade. Of associations and societies for reform we have enough. What we require is to live up to some high ideal, to approach to one whom we worship and admire. In the next chapter I shall describe some of those who can furnish such ideals for India to follow. Here I conclude with the well-known verse of Vyasa as an ideal to aim at: "Let your minds be devoted to Dharma every day of your lives. That alone is the one friend of those going to the next world. Wealth and women, even though cherished by the wise, form no part of one's self, nor are they stable."

PART II.

RELIGIONS.

Lead us from the unreal to the real; lead us from darkness to light; lead us from death to immortality.

असतोमासद्गमय । तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ॥
मृत्योर्मामृतं गमय ॥
मन्मना भवमद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यंते प्रतिजाने प्रियोसिमे ॥
सर्वधर्म्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वामूसर्व पापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

Fix thy mind upon Me, be My Devotee,
Sacrifice to Me, prostrate thyself before
Me, and thou shalt come even to Me.
I pledge thee My troth, thou art dear to Me.
Renouncing all Dharmas, come unto me alone for shelter,
sorrow not, I will liberate thee from all sins.

एकःसमस्तंयदिहास्तिकिञ्चित, तदच्युतोनास्तिपरमृततोन्यत् ।
सोहं सचत्वं सच सर्वमेतत्, आत्म स्वरूपं त्यज भेद मोहम् ॥

All that here *is*, is Achyuta (Vishnu), nothing else is, He is I; He is Thou, He is all this, He is the Atma. Do thou relinquish all illusion of duality.

I.—THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS IN ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND MODERN INDIA.

We have seen that Hindu society of both ancient and mediæval India was a highly civilized society, possessing many an institution which deserves not only admiration, but also imitation in the spirit in which it was originally conceived. *Dharma* (duty) and *Satya* (righteousness), were the two moving forces of Indian society of the past. Sanskrit has no word corresponding to the word *religion* of Western countries. But the word *Dharma* in it means that which supports, not like *religion*, that which only binds, and the reason seems to be, that in the words *Satya* (truth) and *Dharma* (duty) of the Hindu Scriptures, was comprised all that

binds man not only to his fellow-creatures, but also to all that exists, as well as points out the relation in which he stands to God.

The Creed of the Rishis of the Vedas.

The aim of the Aryans was to seek unity through truth and duty. Their religion was therefore *Ekam Sad Viprah Vahudha Vadanti, Agnim, Yamam, Matri S'avanam Ahu.* "The wise call the one *Sat* in many ways; they call it Agni, Yama, Matri Swá." (Rig Veda, I. 164-46.) The rishis who sang of Prajapáti or Indra, or Agni, as "he alone who was God above gods," or as the maker of all things, did not mean to eulogize this or that power of nature as the Supreme Being, but to declare Him, manifested as Agni or Indra or Prajapáti, to be the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Their goal was to realize the *Atma* (Supreme Spirit) as the Sovereign Lord of all beings. *Sa eva ayam atma, Sarvesham bhutanam adhi-pati, Sarve sham bhutanam raja.* (Sathpatha Bráhmana, XIV. 5, 5, 15.) "This self is verily the Lord of all beings. the Sovereign of all" And we read: "The Bráhmana who is wise and recognizes all things to be in the *atma*, who does not become bewildered when pondering upon it, and who recognizes the *atma* in every created thing, shines in heaven" (Apastamba Sutras, 1, 8, 23, 1.) The ideal of both ancient and mediæval India was therefore essentially Vedantic, and for the enlightened and the cultured no better ideal than to do one's duty unselfishly, in order to find his ultimate rest in the source and the innermost self of all, could be held up. Their object of contemplation was the *Virata* form of the Creator as manifested in the creation: "A thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet has the Purusha. He encompasses all this universe, and is yet above it to the extent of ten fingers. All that is, which has been and which shall ever be, is verily Purusha. He is the Lord of immortality, and because He quits his true nature in order to appear as this manifested creation, therefore His manifestation, which is for the bestowal of fruit of their actions upon creatures living in the world, is not His real nature. All that has been, is or will ever be, is merely His glory. The Purusha is greater than it: all these creatures are merely a fourth part of Him. The other three portions, which are Immortality itself, are in His own self-effulgent nature. This Purusha, with His three portions, is beyond this

universe, the product of nescience, unaffected by its virtue and vice. Only one portion of Him is repeatedly manifested as this diversified world. He manifests himself as this creation with its gods, men, and beasts, pervades it, and Himself becomes all that is animate and inanimate." (Purusha Sukta 1, 2, 3 and 4.)

"In the beginning arose Hiranyagarbha, the one Lord of all beings. He upheld this earth and the heavens. What God is there to whom we shall offer our oblations? He is the Giver of life and vigour. His command all the gods obey. His shade is life immortal. His is death. To what God shall we offer our oblations? He by His might is the sole Lord of all that in the world breathes and winks. He is the Lord of men and cattle. To what God shall we offer our oblations? His are these snow-covered mountains, His the sea and the river Rasa. His arms are these regions. To what God shall we offer our oblations? Through Him is the heaven high and the earth steadfast, He holds firm the regions of the ether and the vault of the sky, by Him is the region of mid-air measured. What God shall we adore with our oblations? (Rig Veda X.—121-1 to 5.)

"One alone is Lord of what is fixed and moving, that walks, that flies, of all this multifold creation. Upon the ancient from of old I meditate. He is our mighty sire and father." (Rig Veda.) "Of that Vaishawanara Self, the head is the Sutejas (heaven), the eye the Vishwarupa (sun), the breath Pirathagvartma (the wind), the trunk (Bahula), Akasa (ether), the bladder, the waters, the feet, the earth, the chest, the altar, the hair, the grass on the altar, the heart the Garhapatya fire, the mind, the Anwaharya fire, the mouth, the Ahavniya fire." (Chandogya Upanishad V.—18-2.)

Religion of the Vedic and Smriti periods.

This form of worship was not only current in the Vedic and the Upanishad, but also in the Smriti period, and the Upanishads and the epics bear ample testimony to the fact that while Brahm, without attributes (nirguna), was enjoined to be an object of realization through *Samadhi* or concentration of thought by the negation of all that is finite, Brahm, as manifested in creation, was enjoined to be an object of worship. This was clearly explained by Krishna to Arjuna when, in reply to his question as to how the Divine ought to be contemplated, he told him to contemplate Him as the Innermost self of all, as the beginning, middle and end of all, as

the seed of all, as all that appears to be glorious, powerful or effulgent. And Krishna's manifestation of His divine power, the Virata, was to show that the manifested was only a portion of the Divine glory (Bhagvatagita, Chapters X and XI). "The Heavens are Thy head, the earth Thy feet, the three worlds are pervaded by Thy might, Thou art the primæval Purusha. The quarters are Thy arms, the sun Thy eye, strength is Thy vital seed. Thy seven senses for the outgoing of the vital energy are restrained, O thou of unmeasurable glory." (Bhishma Stava Raja, verses 98 and 99.)

In ancient India there were no temples nor image-worship. In the epic period, however, we find Arjuna worshipping Siva, who is represented as fighting with him in the disguise of a Kirata (mountaineer), and the offerings made by Arjuna to an image of Siva going to the Kirata. References to places of gods (devayátana) are also met with in the epics, but there is nothing to show that idols were worshipped, in those times, in the same way as they are now. Hero-worship was, however, as great a factor of the Hindu society of that as of every other period. But the heroes were also men who had acquired such a status by their work. The Sastras repeatedly enjoin their readers against image-worship, "*Natasya pratimá asti yasya náma mahad yashah.* There is no image of Him whose name is Great Glory." (Swetaswatara Upanishad, IV.—19.) God was not worshipped with incense and flowers, but with a pure heart, through universal benevolence, kind words and kind actions. "God," says Vashishtha, "is not the lotus-born Brahmá, nor the Lord of the thirteen classes of gods, Indra, nor the god of wind (Vayu), nor the sun, nor the moon, nor a Bráhmana, nor a King, nor I, nor thou, nor the body, nor mind, nor any embodied being, nor any conception of mind, nor Lakshmi, nor Sarswati. God is the Parmatmá, the Supreme Self, the ever blissful Siva." (Yoga Vashishtha, Chapter 29, verses 119 to 121.)

Religion in the Puranic times.

In the Puranic times, also, the ideal of the Upanishads was kept up, though not so steadily as in the epic period. Then man began to recognize his inability to realize the impersonal and turned to Bhakti or devotion, and we read in the Vishnu Purana of Prahláda praying to Vishnu: "In whichever of thousands of births may I pass, may I, O Lord, always have unshaken devotion

to Thy lotus-feet. That love which men of the world ever have for the objects of the world, may I ever have for Thee, always remembering Thee." Even the best of exponents of the religion of non-duality in later times recognized this, for, Sankara says: "Though all difference has ceased to exist, I am thine, O Lord, not Thou mine. The billow is of the sea, not the sea of the billow."

This fervent devotion to God has since been the distinguishing feature of religious life in India, and the wisest and best of this country have either been followers of the religious philosophy of the Upanishads, or of the religion of faith and devotion of later times. Fetich-worship or superstition has never been the religion of the thinking and the cultured of India whether now or in the past, and modern India ought also to recognize the fact more forcibly than it has hitherto done, that it is by a return to purer forms of worship, recognition of the paramount importance of duty, and a common ideal, that its progress towards the goal of all religion lies. "I conceive," says Herbert Spencer, "that the object of religious sentiment will ever continue to be that which it has ever been, the unknown source of all things. While the *forms* under which men are conscious of the unknown source of things may fade away, the *substance* of the consciousness is permanent. Beginning with causal agents conceived as imperfectly known, progressing to causal agents as less known and less knowable, and coming at last to a universal causal agent posited as not to be known at all, the religious sentiment must ever continue to occupy itself with this universal, causal agent." (*Essays*, Speculative and Practical, 43.)

The Sastras have throughout recognized two kinds of religion: the religion of action (*pravriti*) and the religion of (*nivriti*) abstention from action. The former secures heaven so long as the Karma which brought it lasts, the latter leads to *moksha* (emancipation) and freedom from return to the Sansára. The former is, however, recognized as a step towards the latter. Says the Mahábhárata, "Two Brahmans (forms of Brahma) should be known, one that which is represented by *sabda* (word) and the other beyond that. One who has known the *Sabda Brahm*, attains to the Supreme Brahm. Acts only cleanse the body; knowledge, however, is the highest end of man. When all impurities of the heart have

been cleansed by acts, and the felicity of Brahma (Brahmananda is attained, the universe, though it appears to exist, does not in fact exist. Subjugation of senses, charity and abstention from work, are the means of securing that felicity. It is, however, in complete renunciation and forgetfulness of the self that Brahma is attained.'' This is the religion of the Hindus, as taught and practised by their rishis in the past.

In later times Hinduism developed into a system of worship of many gods and goddesses, of powers of nature, of men who attained to eminence by their deeds and of objects both animate and inanimate. Hero-worship came to be one of its chief features. Sects and cults began to multiply till truth was lost sight of in dogma and ceremonial. The principal gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon were recruited from deified heroes and heroines, and Siva's conquest of Tripura, Durga's fight with Mahish and other demons, Vishnu's exploits in subduing the Asuras and Rakshasas through the various incarnations of Varaha, Narsingh, Vaman, the adventures of Rama, Krishna and Hanumana, etc., show how the worship of the great and the good came to form a prominent feature of Indian society. Vishnu, Durga and Shiva may or may not be believed to be historical personages, but there can be no doubt of the existence of Rama and Krishna who are now the two chief objects of worship in India. Efforts were made from time to time to purify religion by various reformers, but not with much success. We shall take a brief survey of these in the sequel ; we commence with Rama and Krishna.

Valmiki, the author of the Ramáyána, describes Rama as a contemporary hero, without deifying him.

Rama.

He commences with inquiring of the rishi Narada as to who in this world was possessed of all good qualities, was brave, cognizant of duty, of a grateful mind, firm in his vows, just in his dealings, kind to every creature, wise, powerful, alone most fair to all men's eyes, having his mind under control, devoid of anger and envy, full of splendour and whom even gods fear in battle. And Narada tells him that though the qualities he mentions are difficult to be found in one person in this world, yet he knew of one who possessed them, and that person was Rama, a scion of the Ikshwaku family. Even

he was possessed of all these virtues, and he describes him as follows :—

With soul subdued, a chief of might,
In Scripture versed, in glory bright,
His steps in virtue's paths are bent,
Obedient, pure and eloquent.
In emprise he wins success,
And dying foes his power confess,
Tall and broad-shouldered, strong of limb,
Fortune has set her mark upon him.
Graced with a conchshell's triple line,
His throat displays the auspicious sign,
High destiny is clear impressed,
On massive jaw and ample chest,
Deep in the muscle scarcely shown,
Embedded lies, his collar-bone ;
His lordly steps are firm and free,
His strong arms reach below the knee,
All fairest graces join to deck
His head, his brow, his stately neck,
And limbs in fair proportion set
The manliest form e'er fashioned yet.
His plighted word he ne'er forgets,
On erring sense a watch he sets.
By nature wise, his teacher's skill
Has trained him to subdue his will :
Good, resolute, and pure and strong,
He guards mankind from scathe and wrong,
And lends his aid, and ne'er in vain
The cause of justice to maintain.
Firm as Himalayas snowy steep,
Unfathomed like the mighty deep,
The peer of Vishnu's power and might,
And lovely as the lord of night ;
Patient as earth, but roused to ire,
Fierce as the world-destroying fire :
In bounty like the lord of gold,
And justice self in human mould.

(Griffith's Valmiki Rámáyana, Canto I.)

And the truth of the above is fully borne out by the exploits of the great hero, who was as great in prosperity as in adversity, and who never departed from the path of duty amidst the strongest temptations. Great was the trial when on the day appointed for his installation as heir-apparent, he was at once told by his father to go into the forest and lead the life of a recluse for fourteen years. "But," says he to his step-mother, "I do not wish to live in the world wedded to gain. Know me equal to the Rishis, devoted to the path of pure duty. Whatever agreeable things can possibly be done by me for my Lord, they are already done even at the sacrifice of life itself." When urged by Lakshaman to disregard the injunctions of his father, he replied, "My father is truth itself, his word is true, his actions are true, he is afraid of the other world. Let him be fearless on that account. Do not, O Lakshaman, indulge in grief at the loss of fortune. A kingdom and a forest are to me equal, life in a forest is blessed."

Again, when after the death of Dashratha he was pressed by the old minister Jábáli to return to Ayodhya and ascend the throne, he replied, "I shall not break the bonds of truth for gain, or from anger or from delusion. The wise have declared the path of the good to lie in adherence to truth, duty, boldness in action, compassion towards all, sweetness of speech, worship of the twice-born, the gods, and the guests. Those who are attached to their duty, who associate with the good, who are possessed of splendour, who are prominent for their charities, who cause no injury to any one, earn respect in the world; those whose impurities are destroyed, are worshipped as great Munis." (Valmiki's Rámáyana, Ayodhya Kanda, Chapter 109.)

In another place he tells Lakshaman: "I tell thee truly that virtue, wealth, and pleasure and the sovereignty of the earth I seek for your sake alone. To establish unity among brothers and for their well-being, I seek for kingly rule. I swear by truth and my arms It is not difficult for me to obtain the empire of the earth, but I do not wish for the position of Indra himself by unrighteous means." (*Ibid*, Chapter 97.) And not only was he great in war, but ready to bury past grudges as soon as the object of the fight was accomplished in the subjugation of the enemy. Accordingly on the death of Rávana, he tells Vibhishan, "All enmities cease with death, my object is accomplished. Do you perform his obsequies. He is the same to me as to you." "The rule of

Ram," *Ramrajya*, is the ideal to which every other rule is referred. "In his rule we read that the widows were not distressed, and there was no fear from voracious animals nor from diseases. People were free from sorrow and trouble. There were no thieves in the kingdom, nor did the old mourn for the loss of the young. All were happy and devoted to virtue. And beholding Rama they did not envy each other. Under Ram's rule people lived for thousands of years and had thousands of children. The trees bore fruits and flowers perpetually, and the clouds poured rain in season, and the winds were pleasant. And the people happily engaged in their respective duties grew pious and truthful, and were devoted to virtue." (Yudha Kanda, Chapter 130.) There may be some exaggeration in this. But that Rama was a model king is amply borne out by his exploits. The whole of this story is strongly human, and he is perhaps the only hero who was, as every one admits, nothing but goodness itself with a life which was one long record of devotion to truth and duty.

The Puranas and writers, like Tulsi Das, have deified him and made him an object of divine worship. But even as described by Valmiki, he furnishes a lofty ideal for India to follow. *Rám Nám* (the name of Rám), affords consolation to thousands. Ram Charitra is read, acted and pondered upon everywhere. The beggar asking for alms says, "Sita Rama, Rama, Rama," is the ordinary Hindu form of salutation, and "Rama's name is alone true." (Ram náma Satya) is repeated when the Hindu is carried to the cremation ground. He has fewer and far less splendid temples than Krishna, and even in Ayodhia, his birthplace, with the exception of the temple of Hanumangarhi, or one or two others, there is none to equal the grandeur or wealth of Krishna's temples in Bindraban or elsewhere. But he lives in the heart of thousands. His birthday, the Ramnoumi, is celebrated in many places in India. His exile and invasion of Lanka, are acted every year in September-October under the name of Ramlila, in almost every place in Upper India; and the crowds of people shouting with one voice, "Shri Raja Ramchandra ki jai" (victory to Raja Ramchandra), shows how deep is the hold he has on the minds of the Indian people. The followers of all sects who worship him, though not learned, are usually men of good character, and some of great devotion also, which cannot always be said of other sects of the Hindus.

Krishna. Another great, perhaps the greatest, Indian hero, after Rama, and an object of universal worship in India, is Krishna, whom his devotees consider to be the perfection of humanity, God himself, as distinguished from other incarnations of Vishnu which were but a portion of the divine (कृष्णस्तु भगवान स्वयं). On the other hand, his opponents regard him as a grossly licentious and an unscrupulous person, and doubt even the fact of his being a historical personage. Krishna is the real hero of Vyasa's great poem, the Mahábhárata, and the importance assigned to him and his teachings and his actions throughout the work by Vyasa who was his contemporary, shows that he was not a mythical but a historical personage. With him stands or falls the whole of the history of the Mahábhárata, and if we doubt his existence, the existence of its other heroes, Yudhishthira, Arjun, Bhima, Bhishma, etc., also become doubtful. There is no warrant for this.

The story of the Mahábhárata was extant in the time of Panini, the great grammarian, who flourished in the 12th or 13th century B.C., when neither the Upanishads nor the Bráhmanas of the Vedas are said to have been written. "*Gavi yudhibhyam Sthirah*" (Panini, 8-3-95) गवियुधिभ्यां स्थिरः refers to Yudhishthira. *Striyam avanti Kunti Kurubhyahsch* (4-1-76) स्त्रियमवन्तिकुन्तिकुरुभ्यश्च refers to Kunti, Yudhishthira's mother. "*Vasudeva Arjunbhyam Bun*" (4-3-98) वासुदेवार्जुनाभ्यांवुन् refers to Arjun and Vasudeo, another name of Krishna. The meaning of the last Sutra is that the affix *bun* comes in the sense "this is his object of veneration," after the words Vasudeo and Arjuna. The fact of Krishna having killed Kansa, his maternal uncle, is also mentioned by Patánjáli in his Vyàkarana Mahâ Bhâshya. *Kansa Badham achashte* कंसबधंमाचष्टे, "*Kansam ghatayati*" कंसघातयति (Note on Panini, 3-1-26) and *Jaghana Kansam kila Vasudevah* जघानकंसंकिलवासुदेव (Note on Panini, 3-2-11). The name of Krishna also occurs in the Chandogya Upanishad (3rd Prapathaka, Chapter 17). Saying all this, Rishi Ghore of the race of Angiras said thus to *Devaki's son, Krishna:* "He who knoweth thus, should, at the time of his death, repeat these three Yajur Veda mantras: 'O Thou art undecaying, Thou art unchanging, Thou art the essence of true life (verse 6).'" References to Parikshita Arjuna's grandson, and Janmajeya, his son, are also found in the Aitreya Bráhmana Pinjika (8-21), and Satpatha Bráhmana (13-5-41). Krishna was

therefore a historical personage and lived some time between the 15th and 16th centuries B C., and his worship is very old in India.

But while a great portion of Krishna's life is founded upon fact, a still greater portion is based upon later additions, and fiction has now-a-days covered the fact so thickly as to make it difficult to separate the two. We shall, however, deal more with facts than with fiction, and try to show what Krishna really was. Every reader of the main story of the Mahábhárata, shorn of all poetical exaggeration and later accretion, will be convinced of the fact of Krishna being the greatest person of his time. It was declared by Bhishma, himself one of the greatest warriors and sages of his time, in the assembly of Yudhishthira, when Krishna's claim to receive the first honour was disputed, that he combined in him, "knowledge of the Vedas and Vedangas and great strength" "Who among men," said Bhishma, "is greater than Krishna? Indeed, liberality, cleverness, knowledge of the Vedas, bravery, modesty, achievements, excellence, intelligence, humility, beauty, firmness, contentment, and prosperity, all eternally abide in Achyuta." (Sabha Parva, Chapter 38, verses 19 and 20.) And, indeed, throughout his life, whether in the court of kings or on the field of battle, in affairs of state as well as in those of every-day life: all these qualities were always prominent. His mission was to establish *dharma* (righteousness) and destroy *adharma*, and he accomplished it. An exemplary child, possessed of almost superhuman strength, he cleared Vrindavana of the evils with which it was then infested. As a charioteer and an athlete he was unsurpassed by any of his contemporaries. Even his pupils never knew what it was to be defeated in battle, much less himself. His intellect was as clear as ever, in matters and situations of the greatest difficulty and danger. He was a man of keen perception, knowing everything whether it appertained to the affairs of this world or of the life to come, in the most thorough manner possible. Always devoted to his own atmá (Supreme Self), finding his pleasure in himself, merciful and kind to the weak, ever ready to help the distressed, never sparing the wicked, even though they were his own kith and kin, doing everything without the smallest thought of personal ease or comfort, busily engaged in the affairs of the world and yet always above it, he was an ideal for his contemporaries, whether they were men of the world or hermits of the forest.

This is the Krishna of the Mahábhárata. He is first introduced to the reader at the Swayamvara of Draupadi in the court of king Draupada, where he pacifies the infuriate princes who were ready to fight the Pandavas for having won Draupadi in the disguise of Bráhmans. There is no reference to his childhood except in the Sabha Parva, Chapter 41, where it is said by Sisupala, when disputing his claim to receive the first honour, " Thou hast once more simply pained our hearts by reciting particularly the deeds of this one (Krishna), such as the slaying of Putana and others. . . . . If Krishna in his infancy slew a vulture, what is there remarkable in that, or in that other feat of his, O Bhishma, in his slaughter of Aswa, and Vriswa, both of whom were unskilled in battle? If this one threw down by a kick an inanimate piece of wood, a car, what is there remarkable in that? Bhishma, what is there remarkable in this one having supported for a week the Govardhana mountain, which is like an ant-hill? While sporting on the top of a mountain this one ate a large quantity of food. Hearing these words of thine, many have wondered exceedingly. But O, thou who art conversant with the rules of morality, is this not more wonderful still, that that great person whose food this one ate, was slain by him?"

We next find him assisting Arjun in clearing the Khandava forest and accompanying Bhima to the court of Jarasandha, king of Magadha, and fighting him. In the great Rajasuya Yagya of Yudhishthira he takes upon himself the humble duty of serving the Brahmins. When the sacrifice was over, and the question arose as to who should receive the first honour, Krishna was recognized to be entitled to it. Sisupala, king of Chedi, disputes it, and is slain on the spot. After the sacrifice Krishna returns to Dwarka, telling Yudhishthira to cherish his subjects with ceaseless vigilance and patience. Says he, " As the clouds are unto all creatures, as large trees of spreading boughs are unto birds, as he of a thousand eyes (Indra) is unto the immortals, be thou the refuge and support of thy relatives." (Sabha Parva, Chapter 45.) When Yudhishthira has lost his kingdom and goes into exile, Krishna meets the Pandavas and comforts them in misfortune, giving them all the help he can. It is, however, when the question of peace or war with the Kauravas is being discussed, that we find him displaying true statesmanship. He advises

the Pandavas to obtain their kingdom by peaceful means, if possible, and suggests the despatch of an ambassador to the Kuru court and is ultimately himself chosen as such. In the course of the debate we find him applauding action as follows:—

"If anyone thinks anything better than action, I consider him weak and his words meaningless . . . . . . It is by the virtue of work that the gods flourish . . . . The saints shine in the other world by following a life of study, austerity and work." (Mahábhárata Udyoga Parva, Chapter 28, verses 8, 9 and 16.) "The exertions of the wise are always associated with virtue, pleasure and profit. If all three cannot be attained, men should follow virtue and profit. If these three are pursued separately, those who have self-control, chose virtue; those who are neither good nor bad, chose profit, which is always a subject of dispute, while the fools only chose gratification of desire. He who seeks profit and gratification, should, however, practise virtue, for neither profit nor gratification of desire is dissociated from virtue." (*Ibid*, Chapter 124, verses 34 to 37.)

In the Kuru court he strongly advises Dhritrashthra and his sons to compromise, but unsuccessfully, and when Duryodhana and his adherents offer to entertain him, he declines the hospitality, saying that he had never departed from the path of duty from motives of gain, that only when there is love between the host and guest, is it proper for the latter to partake of the former's food, and that Duryodhana being addicted to vice, the food which he offered was defiled (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 40). When threatened with imprisonment by Duryodhana and his followers, he laughs in scorn and tells them to do their worst, that if he wished he could punish them that very moment and hand them over to the Pandavas, but that he shall do nothing from wrath or under the influence of a sinful understanding. The embassy fails and both parties determine to fight. Krishna does not fight, but gives his army to Duryodhana and himself becomes the charioteer of Arjuna. At the field of battle he rouses Arjuna to action by preaching the Bhagwata Gita. The key-note of his teaching is "do your duty without regard to the fruit thereof. Do not be inactive, nor trouble yourself about the result of work. Dedicating your thoughts and actions to Me (the Supreme Being), do you act your part in the world and you will be happy here and hereafter."

As the great apostle of *dharma* he essentially combined in him all the best traits of humanity in their fullest development. If the substance of religion is culture, then Krishna was the most cultured, and therefore the most religious person of his age. Whatever he did was characterized by one thing, which was that he did it to the best of his power, according to the dictates of dharma, and having done it never troubled himself about it afterwards. Repeatedly has Vyasa said of him, "Wherever Krishna is, there is dharma; wherever dharma is, there is victory." The Bhagvata Gita *is* Krishna. According to him, even for the person who had no wish for himself, performance of duty was necessary in order to preserve the bonds of society. "There is for me," says he, "nothing to perform, nothing to attain, nothing unattained, and yet I am engaged in work. If I do not work vigilantly, others shall also fall in my ways. If I do not work, the world will suffer, and men will perish. As the foolish engage in work from motives of reward, let the wise engage without such motive in order to preserve the bonds of society." (Bhagvata Gita, Chapter III, verses 22 to 25.) He was as dauntless in the field of battle as in hostile courts, and to his skill and foresight was due the success of the Pandavas. In the thick of fight at Arjun's bidding he unyokes the steeds of the car, and while the latter keeps the enemy at bay, Krishna "smiling, and with the coolest assurance as if he were in the midst of the women . . . . , leads the steeds into the hall of arrows created by Arjuna and grooms them, removes their fatigue, plucks out their arrows, waters them and yokes them to the car" (Drona Parva, Chapter 99.)

It is, however, thought by many that he cared more for the end than the means employed. For instance, when Drona's death depended upon Yudhishthira's telling him that his son Ashwathaman was dead, Krishna urged him to say so. "If Drona fights," says Kṛishna, "filled with rage even for half a day, I tell thee, truly, thy army will be annihilated. Save us then from Drona. Under such circumstances falsehood is better than truth. By telling an untruth for saving life, one is not touched with sin. There is no sin in untruth spoken unto women, or in marriages, or for saving cows, or for rescuing a Bráhmana." (Mahábhárata, Drona Parva, Chapter 191, verses 46 to 49.) The last of these verses, however, is not found in the Bombay but in the Bengal text only.

On another occasion we read of Yudhishthira having charged Arjuna with cowardice in not slaying Karna, another great Kuru warrior, and telling him to give his *gandiva* (bow) to another person. Now it was Arjuna's vow to kill at once the person who charged him with such an act of cowardice, but here was his own elder brother, whom he had followed through good and evil fortune, and whose death meant Arjuna's own death. How to act, how not to sacrifice the life of one who was so near and dear to him, at the same time keeping his vow unbroken, was the dilemma in which Arjuna was placed. But Krishna came to his rescue and told him that no one was greater than a speaker of truth : "Behold! however," said he, "the practice of truth is exceedingly difficult to be understood as regards its nature. Truth may be unutterable, and even falsehood may be utterable, in cases where truth would become falsehood and falsehood truth. In a situation of peril to life, and in marriage, falsehood becomes utterable. In a situation involving the loss of one's property, falsehood becomes utterable. On an occasion of marriage, or love, or when life is in danger, or when one's entire property is about to be taken away, or for the sake of a Bráhmana, falsehood may be uttered." (Karna Parva, Chapter 69, verses 31 to 34.) And Krishna illustrated it by the instance of the hunter who, although guilty of a cruel act in killing a blind beast, went to heaven because of the latter being a source of trouble to others ; while a Rishi who had taken a vow of always speaking the truth, had to languish in hell, because of his telling certain robbers who were following a party of travellers as to where the party had gone, whereby the robbers killed them. He concluded by saying, "Dharma is that which causes no injury to any creature, and Dharma is so called because it upholds all. (*Dharnat Dharmah.*) Whenever, by an oath, one may escape from a gang of thieves and robbers, or save his wealth from them, or from giving it to sinful persons, or where there is danger to life, or risk of destruction of one's entire body of relations and kinsmen, it is better to speak an untruth. The person who speaks an untruth on such occasions is not guilty." (*Ibid*, Chapter 57, verses 64 and 65.) Finally, Krishna advised Arjuna to keep his vow by addressing his brother disrespectfully which was equivalent to death.

How far modern casuists are likely to agree with Krishna, is left for the reader to judge. Many writers think both these

portions of the Mahábhárata to be later interpolations, though Krishna's view, that that is truth which is consonant to *dharma*, and that is *dharma* which is conducive to the good of all, otherwise it is *adharma*, is founded upon a very old doctrine of the Hindus, and has been followed by them from time immemorial. In the Mahábhárata it is said : " Silence is better than speech; if speak you must, then it is better to speak the truth ; if truth is to be spoken, it is better to say what is good ; and if what is good is to be said, it is better to say what is consistent with *dharma*." (Udyóga Parva, Chapter 35, verse 12.) In another place it is said : " There is nothing higher than truth. It is better again to speak what is beneficial than to speak the truth. I hold that to be truth which is fraught with the greatest benefit of all creatures." Mahábhárata Santi Parva, Chapter 330, verse 13.)

Of the other incidents of the life of Krishna as given in the Mahábhárata, may be mentioned (1) his exultation at the death of Ghatotkacha, son of Bhima, which he explains by saying that had Ghatotkacha not been killed, Arjuna would have been killed instead, and the fate of the war would have been otherwise ; (2) his running at Bhishma to kill him in defiance to his vow not to fight, when he found the old Kuru warrior invincible; (3) his suggesting to Bhima to strike Duryodhana on the thigh when he found the latter unassailable in every other portion of the body. All this is explained by saying that all is fair in war, and that those who denounce Krishna would probably have done the same under similar circumstances.

The Mahábhárata concludes with the victory of the Pandavas, and Krishna was mainly the cause of it. Gandhari, the mother of Duryodhana, and other sons of Dhritrashthra who were killed in battle, however, denounces him as the cause of all this slaughter, and tells him that " on the thirty-sixth year from this, he shall, after causing the slaughter of his own kinsmen, friends and sons, perish in the wilderness by disgustful means." Krishna shows no agitation at this, and tells Gandhari that he had already known of it and that she had by pronouncing the curse only assisted him in his mission. The Pandavas are now installed in Hastinapur, and though Yudhishthira expresses to Krishna his gratitude for assistance and advice in their hour of trial, and eulogizes him as the Supreme Being, the latter remains unmoved, and when pressed for an

answer, tells Yudhishthira that he was thinking of the old Kuru hero Bhishma, who was then lying on a bed of arrows meditating upon him. He then tells Yudhishthira that after Bhishma had departed from the world, every kind of knowledge shall disappear, and advises him to question him about the duties of kings and of persons in various stations in life. Bhishma and Krishna who were both as gr. at in war as in learning, were great admirers of each other, and while the former regarded Krishna as the Supreme Being Himself, the latter regarded Bhishma as " having never transgressed the path of duty, as being the very embodiment of Dharma, a second Markandeya and having even death under his command."

Bhishma's advice does not assuage Yudhishthira's grief for the loss of his kinsmen in battle. But Krishna who was ever ready to assist the Pandavas, tells him that the time had now come when he should fight his own battle alone and single-handed, and through force of abstraction obtain control over his own mind. "The word with two letters (मम) 'mine,' is death, and the word with three letters (निर्मम) 'not mine' is eternal Brahma. The consciousness that this or that is mine, or attachment to worldly things is death and the absence thereof is Brahman. And these two Brahman and *Mrityu*, O King, have their seats in the souls of all creatures. Remaining unseen, they, without doubt, wage war with each other. What matters the world to him who, even if he has acquired the sovereignty of the whole earth with its animate and inanimate creatures, does not become attached to it, or engrossed in its enjoyment? On the other hand, if one who has renounced the world, and taken to the life of the recluse in the forest, living on wild roots and edibles, has, O son of *Pritha*, a craving for the good things of the world, and is attached to them, he may be said to have *Mrityu* in his mouth. Crookedness of heart leads to destruction, and rectitude to Brahm. This and this alone is the aim and object of all true wisdom; what can mental distraction do (to one who understands this)? Thy *Karma* has not yet been annihilated, nor have thy enemies been subjugated, for thou dost not yet know the enemies that are still lurking within thy own flesh. The time has now arrived, when thou must fight the battle which each must fight single-handed, with his own mind. Therefore, O Chief of the Bharata race, thou must now prepare to carry the struggle against thy own mind, and by dint of abstraction and the

merit of thy own *Karma*, reach the other side of existence and overcome this mysterious and unintelligible (mind). In this war there is no need of any missiles, nor of friends nor attendants. The battle which is to be fought alone and single-handed is now before thee. And if thou art vanquished in it, thou shalt find thyself in the most wretched plight. Knowing this, O Son of Kunti, and acting accordingly, thou shall attain success ; knowing the destiny of all creatures, and following the path of thy ancestors, do thou duly administer thy kingdom." (Mahábhárata Ashwamedha Parva, Chapters 12 and 13 abstracted.)

Krishna was a living illustration of what he preached, and throughout his life he never sought anything for himself, but essentially lived for others. Witness his refusing the throne of Mathura on the death of Kansa and making it over to Ugrasena, preferring to serve under him and prizing freedom above the cares of sovereignty. His teaching was that although the practice of virtue was essential for the purification of the soul, it should not be mistaken for the goal which lies in the complete subjugation of all sense of "I" and "mine," complete freedom from action, and knowledge of that which is eternal and indestructible. On leaving the Pandavas, on his way home he meets the Rishi Uttanka who is about to curse him for having brought about the Mahábhárata war, but Krishna laughs at the threat, and tells him that no one in the world was capable of injuring him and that he brought about the war when he could not avert the end by peaceful means. The Pandavas now prepare for the great Ashwamedha sacrifice and during their absence, the widow of Abhimanyu gives birth to a still-born child. The Pandava family would have become extinct and the course of Indian history entirely changed, but for Krishna who revives the child by swearing by his love of truth. "I never utter an untruth even in jest, never have I turned back from battle. By the merit of these acts let this child revive. As truth and righteousness are always established in me, let this dead child of Abhimanyu revive by the merit of these." (Ashwamedha Parva, Chapter 59.) It was now thirty-six years after the great war, and Krishna knew that his mission on earth was over, and that his hour was come. His own family and kinsmen had become largely addicted to vice and he could not prevent their impending ruin. They go in a body to

Prabhasa at a short distance from Dwarka, where, under the influence of wine, they kill each other. His brother Balrama throws himself into the sea, and Krishna knowing that his hour had come, restrains his senses, speech and mind, and goes into Samadhi, when a hunter mistaking him for a deer, shoots him in the feet.

This is Krishna's life as given in the Mahábhárata. There is here nothing which represents him in the way he has been latterly presented to the Indian people, by the Puranas, and those who have followed them. If the Puranas are to be believed, he must have been a grossly licentious person, guilty of violating the chastity of the milkmaids of Brija, stealing their clothes when they were bathing in the Jumna at Vrindavana, and having illicit connection with Radha, the wife of Ayan Ghosh, with whom his name is now inseparably associated. This cannot be true, nor did Sisupala, Krishna's worst detractor, charge him with these crimes. All that he charged him with, was his murder of Jarasandha, king of Magadha, in an unfair manner, which was not true, and with his having married Rukmini who was intended for Sisupala, which was no dishonour for Krishna to do.

It is, moreover, incredible, in the case of a person who set before him the lofty ideal of establishing the empire of righteousness, and who professed to set an example to others. Even in the Puranas these adventures are described in varying details. They are less detailed in the Vishnu Purana than in the Hari Vansa. In the Bhagwata they are described in greater detail, and in the greatest detail in the Brahmavaivarta Purana. But none of these has any historical foundation. There is not a word about them in the Mahábhárata and in the Vishnu Purana, though there is an account of Krishna's sporting with the *Gopis* on a Sarada night, there is no mention of Radha. It is the same in the Hari Vansa also. In the Bhagwata, Radha is only once mentioned, while in the Brahmavaivarta we have an elaborate account of Brahma performing Krishna's marriage with her. The same is the case with the clothes-stealing adventure. It is not mentioned in the Vishnu Purana or the Hari Vansa, but only in the Bhagwata and the Brahmavaivarta. The *ras lila* is mentioned in the Vishnu Purana and the Hari Vansa, but not in the same detail as in the Bhagwata. The Bhagwata and the Brahmavaivarta worked up into detail from imagination the materials derived from Vishnu

Purana and the Hari Vansa, but whence did the latter themselves get them? None of these four Puranas gives a complete account of Krishna. The Hari Vansa does not describe the part he played in the Mahábhárata, nor his last days, nor the destruction of his family and kinsmen through vice and mutual discord. It stops short at his visit to Pushakara to see the Rishis after he had killed all his enemies and seen his foster father and mother in Brija. The same is the case with the accounts in the Bhagwata and the Vishnu Purana. This shows that none of them has any historical value. Regarding Krishna's wives also, all that the Hari Vansa says is that all the damsels who were kept in confinement by Narakasura offered themselves to Krishna after he had killed Naraka in battle, without saying that their number was 16,000. Subsequent writers make it that number. Their accounts have thus unconsciously made one who was the apostle of *dharma*, who never relinquished it from fear or love or delusion, and who identified himself with the Supreme Brahma and exhorted Arjuna to fix his thoughts upon him alone, to worship him alone, to bow to him alone, and to seek him alone relinquishing every other *dharma* (Bhagvad Gita, XVIII—65), a gross debauchee at a very early age, and later on a husband of sixteen thousand and one hundred wives! Writings like these, it must be said with great regret, have, instead of exalting Krishna, brought him down lower than even what was required to suit the popular tastes of the time. Much of what goes under the name of the Vaishnavism of the present day, is due to this lowering of the great hero. The Bhagvat, the basis of Krishna-worship in these times, as I have already said, is very good poetry, full of deep emotion and a literary work of great merit. But it is a very modern book, written not by Vyasa, but by Bopdeva in Bengal, after the advent of the Mohammedans about the fifteenth century. It cannot, therefore, have any value as a history of Krishna, like the Mahábhárata which was the work of a contemporary writer. Other Puranic and vernacular poets have simply elaborated the accounts given in the Bhagvat, and have therefore even less historical value. Even the author of Bhagvat was not quite sure of his ground; for, after describing the Raslila, he introduces King Parikshit questioning Suka as to why when Krishna had incarnated for the purpose of

establishing dharma, and suppressing vice, and when he was the Lord himself, did he act directly in contravention of all systems of religion, by having illicit intercourse with the wives of others, why did he perpetrate such a deed? And Suka is made to say, "that those who are unattached to anything whatever, who are free from all sense of egoism, who are the lords of all, incur no sin by acting contrary to the dictates of conventional virtue. Their actions should not, however, be imitated by ordinary mortals, for if Siva drank poison and remained uninjured, it does not follow that ordinary mortals should do the same. The words of guardians of humanity, not their actions, ought to be followed. When those who devote themselves to the feet of the Lord become free to act as they chose, why could He who assumes diverse forms at His own pleasure, not do the same?" (Bhagvata, Book 10th, Chapter 33). The writer has thus first invented a fiction and then sought to justify it by the rule of the Sastras that one who is above all sense of separateness, is not affected by the rules of conventional virtue and vice. But he forgets the well-known saying of his own hero, that he did his work in life in order to preserve the bonds of society as well as to set an example to others. He did not also realize the mischief of the doctrine he preached in the mouths of the unlearned, nor the premium it set to vice which it subsequently did. Attempts have also been made to explain Krishna's amorous adventures esoterically, by saying that the milkmaids of Vrindavana represent the various *Vritis*, (modification of the human mind,) and Krishna the supreme self, in whom they find their ultimate rest, that *Radha* represents the human soul, and Krishna the supreme soul, that the clothes-stealing allegory represents the attitude with which the human soul ought to seek the divine soul, after leaving aside all its wordly trappings. Such explanations are, however, not likely to carry conviction to those who seek the historical and not a fanciful Krishna, and for them the Krishna of the Mahábhárata is quite sufficient. The popular mind to which the Krishna of the Bhagvata, or of writers, like *Surdas*, appeals more strongly than the Krishna of Vyasa, fails to see in the former anything that can be considered objectionable, and thinks the modern view to be heterodox. But the truth is that Krishna, as described by these later writers, has been the chief cause of much of what has degraded Vaishnava

worship into sensualism of an objectionable character. But for this the actions of the *Gosains* of the Ballabhacharya sect would not have been tolerated in any community to the extent they have been tolerated in India. *Radha Krishna*, with all the poetry associated with the name, is good for fiction, but not for exalting the mind or purifying the emotions. For them the teachings of the Bhagvad Gita, the Anugita, and the life of Krishna as given in the Mahábhárata, are quite sufficient.

Krishna, though a religous reformer, never founded any sect or cult. The tendency of his teachings was always towards freedom in thought and action. He recognized the distinction of caste not from birth, but from *guna* and *karma* (attributes and qualifications.) "This pleasant speech which the unwise who are devoted to verbal discussions about the Vedas, who think of nothing beyond, and who are attached to desire, utter for the purpose of attaining heaven and fruit of action, that speech which concerns itself with much action for the purpose of worldly enjoyment, cannot lead to samadhi those whose hearts are wedded to it, nor does it steady the intellect. The Vedas concern themselves with that which is made of three qualities (the world), be thou above the world, free from opposites, always abiding in thy true self, never caring for acquisition or preservation of what is acquired. When thy intellect crosses the mind of delusion, thou shalt be free of what is to be heard and what has been already heard." (Bhagvad Gita, Chapter II, verses 42—45.) His was the religion of the heart, not of sects or cults nor of temple-worship, but of unselfish performance of duty, pure devotion and realization of one's self as the Self of all, and had India followed it, it would not have witnessed the many religious and social revolutions it did later on.

Buddhism.

Krishna's departure from the world marked the commencement of the Kali Yuga, not only in the popular, but also in the true sense, for, during the period which followed, we have superstition and dogma crushing the nation beneath their weight, truths of religion completely forgotten, Brahmavidya which was as much the property of the Kshatriyas and the other classes as of the Brahmans, gradually declining and crushed by forms and ceremonies, and Brahmins asserting themselves as the custodians of the national conscience and playing upon it as they chose. This continued for

about 800 or 900 years till Buddha appeared on the scene, and by his life and teachings once more infused new life into the dry bones of Hinduism. It is not necessary to describe his life in detail, as it does not come within the proper sphere of a work like this. History affords no other example of a prince nurtured in the midst of luxury, full of life and vigour, with nothing to draw him away from the world, renouncing everything—a young wife, an only child, an aged father, a kingdom and ease and comfort and giving himself up to the severest asceticism, for no other object but to find a path out of the misery of the world for suffering humanity. There was nothing new in his teachings. His four truths of the existence of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation thereof through cessation of desire and the path of attainment thereof through right living, right thinking, and right acting, and his ideas about Nirvana had long been the possession of India from time immemorial. The Upanishads and the Gita sang no other tune; Vyasa expounded no other truth in the Mahábhárata. Buddha only brought it home once more, both by example and precept, and purified society of superstitions which had stood in the way of their acceptance. The verdict of Rhys Davis that he was the wisest and the best of Hindus is, therefore, true to the very letter. In the Puranas and later Hindu literature, he is represented as an incarnation of Vishnu for the purpose of deluding mankind, an atheist and a perverter of religion. So perverted had the intellect of the nation become! Modern Indian thinkers, however, look upon him as one of the few men who have appeared in India from time to time to uphold the cause of truth and purification of society from priest craft and dogma. His followers though more numerous than those of any other religion in the world, do not now count more than 32 out of every 10,000 of the Indian population. But the influence of his teachings survives, in the regard for life which now characterises Hindus. In Bengal some of the Buddhistic divinities are said to have been incorporated into the Hindu Pantheon, and Dharma, the second person of the Buddhist trinity, is worshipped as a Hindu god. Many think the absence of caste distinction in the temple of Jagannath in Orissa to be also due to Buddhistic influence, while in Gaya the pilgrim offers oblations at the place where Buddha attained samadhi. Before the advent of Buddhism there were no religious sects, nor monastic

orders in India, and their subsequent development may well be said to be one of the remnants of that religion, till we have now religious sects and *maths* by the thousand, each professing to have found out and living the life of truth, and yet each wedded more to externals than to the religion of its founder.

Jainism. Closely allied to Buddhism is Jainism, which is now the religion of more than thirteen lacs of people in India, and whose followers form one of the wealthiest trading communities of this country. The Jains are divided into two principal sects, the Swetambaras and the Digambaras; the former consisting of those whose ascetics and images are clothed in white, and the latter of those whose ascetics and images go naked. The sect was founded by prince Vardhmana or Mahavira of Vaisali about 500 B.C. He was the twenty-fourth Tirthankara. The account of his life as given in Jain books, is similar to accounts of Buddha's life, and the identity in the names of his family members may lead to the suspicion that they have been copied from Buddhistic books with slight alterations. Buddha's former name was Siddhartha. Mahavira's father was Siddhartha. The story of his birth is as miraculous as that of Buddha, and gods and heavenly nymphs assist and rejoice at it as they do at Buddha's. Mahavira leaves his kingdom to be governed by his brother, and adopts the life of an ascetic, observing frequent fasts of several months' duration and becomes absorbed in meditation like Buddha. During this period he suffers all sorts of privations and persecutions at the hands of his enemies and aboriginal tribes of India. He continues unshaken, and even the powers of darkness cannot assail him, just as they cannot assail Buddha. Like Buddha he attains to Samadhi under a *sal* tree near Rijupalika after twelve years of asceticism, and receives the homage of the chief of the gods. His fame spreads and followers commence coming in from Brahmins and other castes. Mahavira, like Buddha, now goes about disseminating his doctrines which are similar to Buddha's scrupulous love of life, avoidance of falsehood, practice of truth, avoidance of giving pain to others, observance of continence and avoidance of family life. He believed in the law of *Karma*, and declared it to be the seed of the tree of the Sansara. According to him the *Jiva* was not identical with the body,

and he believed in incarnation following *Karma*, whether good or bad. Bondage was dependence or connection with worldly acts, liberation, detachment thereof and independence affected by knowledge. He believed in the existence of the gods, heaven and hell, a future life, virtue and vice. His *Nirvana* was the extinction of acts and synonymous with *moksha* or liberation. Mahavira's labours were confined mostly to Gangetic India, where he seemed to have gained a number of followers. At the age of 72 he departed the body through Samadhi.

The Jains are mostly Vaishyas, and in some parts of the country they freely intermarry with Vaishnava Vaishyas. In others they do not. Some of the Vaishyas, like the *Seths* of Mathura, professed both Jainism and Vaishnavism. As the late head of the firm said in one of his speeches at a caste conference, he looked upon both as his two eyes and could not afford to lose either. In other parts of the country there is much prejudice against the Jains, and a sloka of the Puranas is cited as authority for facing a mad elephant rather than visiting a Jain temple. These prejudices are, however, fast disappearing, and Jains and Vaishnavas meet in the same conference. The lay portion of the sect are as scrupulous of life as the clergy. Fasts of long duration, especially during the month of *Bhadon*, are very common. They do not eat after dark for fear of injuring life, and abstain either during the month of *Bhadon*, or during the whole of the rainy season, from eating green vegetables. Their mendicants tie a cloth round their mouths, and carry a brush to sweep off insects before sitting. Their temples are splendid edifices of marble, and are richly endowed, and they have a command of money for public objects which few communities in India have. Their services are very simple, and their priests are not Jains but Brahmans, called Bhojakas. Their chief objects of worship are the Tirthankaras, chiefly Parasnath and Mahavira. Their doctrines are contained in a large number of books which are now being made available to the public through the efforts of modern Jain reformers and their schools, *pinjrapoles* and homes for ascetics are known all over the country. Most of them observe both ordinary Hindu and Jain ceremonies as suits the occasion, and in most parts of the country there is not much to distinguish them from the latter.

Revival of Hinduism under Sankara, Ramanuja, etc.

Buddhism, which came to be the State religion of India in the time of Asoka in the third century B.C., succumbed to Brahminism shortly after. But the latter also became a lifeless system and continued to be so for several centuries, till Sankara, the great exponent of *advaitism* (non-duality), appeared on the scene, and once more infused life into it by restoring the living religion of truth for the dead religion of form and dogma. We shall speak of his work later on. He was followed by Ramanuja who brought devotion to the door of the poor and the lowly. His work survives, though not to the same extent as Sankara's His God is not *nirguna* (void of attributes), but *saguna*, having all the auspicious attributes and assuming at times various forms for the benefit of his creatures. Four of such forms are well known in the Vaishnava Sastras, *viz.*, Vasudeo, Sankarsana, Praduyumna and Anirudha, corresponding to the Supreme Brahman, the individual soul (Jiva), the mind and the principle of egoism of the Vedanta. His system is one of Visishtadwaita or duality with a difference. He prefers love and devotion to God to wisdom, and declares that mere knowledge cannot bring about that which can be accomplished by devotion. This latter alone prepares the devotee for realization of the truths of the Upanishads. God, in His *sukshama* or subtle form, is without passion, immortal, free from natural wants, of true desires and true resolves and the innermost self of all. He is worshipped by cleaning his temples and images, providing flowers and perfumes for religious rites, presentation of offerings, repeating His names on the rosary and by seeking union with Him. This leads to *sayugya*, *salokya* and *samipya*, a condition of perpetual residence in Vaikuntha, the abode of Vishnu, partaking of His essence, abiding near Him, but not merging into Him and retaining one's individuality. When man by merit of his good deeds done in many incarnations, washes off all his impurities, he seeks refuge in the feet of the Supreme. Then through the teachings of his master he acquires daily the virtues of control of the senses and the mind, asceticism, forgiveness, rectitude, duly attends to the duty of his order and avoids what is evil. He then betakes himself to the constant practice of meditating upon Him and hearing His praises, till by His grace he forgets everything in devotion to Him.

The followers of this sect are called Vaishnavas, and they are largely found in southern as well as other parts of India. Ramanuja's disciple was Ramanand. He has also a large number of followers in all parts of Upper India where they are called Vaishnavas, Bairagis or Ramanandis. At the last census they numbered more than 16 lacs. Both mendicants and laymen can be Vaishnavas, Most of them are worshippers of Rama and repeat and salute each other with 'Jay Rama,' or 'Sita Rama' or 'Rama Rama.' They are generally not a very learned class, though some of them are great devotees. Their most popular book is the Rámáyana of Tulsidass, and they are very scrupulous in the matter of food, though many of the mendicant class are greatly addicted to smoking *ganja* and *charas*, and are of a ragged and dirty appearance. Any piece of wood or stone with a piece of cloth and tinsel is put up as an image of God to extort money from pilgrims, and one seldom feels any elevation of thought by attending their services.

Kabir.

After Ramanand comes Kabír Dás, or Kabír the well-known weaver reformer of Benares. According to Mr. Grierson, he lived in the fifteenth century A.D., and was a disciple of Ramanand, and the founder of the Kabirpanthi sect. His followers are still more or less largely to be met with in almost all places in Upper India and the Central Provinces. They numbered about seven lacs at the last census. Kabír was essentially a people's reformer, and a very free and fearless exposer of all cant and dogma, an uncompromising adherent to truth wherever it was found, and an idealist who brought idealism from the pedestal of thought into the life of the people. He respected neither caste nor sect, and as freely denounced what seemed to him apart from truth in the practices of the Hindus as in those of the Mahommedans. His Sabda, Sákhi and Sukhnidhán are all popular works in Hindi literature, and he seems to have largely influenced the views of the great Sikh reformer Nanak. Says he: "The mind is one, you may apply it either in devotion to God, or towards the vanities of the world. If thou wishest for Me, be like Me, leave off the vanities of the world. Thou hast everything in thy own self. There is no enemy in the world. Leave off thy egotism, make thy mind peaceful, and the world shall all be kind to thee. Make

thy mind steady by every means in thy power, whether it be by devotion, or knowledge or meditation. Neither Máyá dies, nor does the mind ever die. Desire and hope never die, only the body dies again and again, so says Dás Kabír. O, Brothers, such is the sweet nectar of Hari's love that by drinking of it, one becomes immortal. Dhru drank of it, Prabháda drank of it, Mírabaí drank of it, the Saint of Balkh and Bokhárá drank of it, giving up his kingdom. The nectar of Hari's love is, however, dear in price and only the few who have no glasses in their houses can drink of it. Man runs towards everything but, says Kabír ! hear, O wise men, it is Hari's love alone which purifies There is nothing like Hari. Every one wishes to go there, but I do not know where Heaven is. Thou knowest not thy own innerself and merely talkest of Heaven. So long as thy heart yearns for Heaven, so long it cannot yearn for the feet (of Hari). No moat nor rampart of Heaven do I see. Says Kabír, it is the company of the wise alone which is Heaven. All thy life has been wasted in mere talk, without thinking of Krishna. "At the age of five thou wast an innocent child, at twenty and twenty-five thou travelledest in various countries in search of wealth, at thirty thy thirst of wealth was burning hot, till thou collectedest lacs and crores and went not content. In old age thy powers became dull and thy throat choked with phlegm. Thou never visitedest the wise, but hast spent thy life in vain pursuits. The world is selfish and all is vanity, says Kabír. O Fool! awake, why art thou beguiled?

These earthly kings of yesterday, are vainly showing themselves off. But thy servant never wanders about. He is master of the three worlds. O my foolish heart, awake and engage in the service of God; no one who spreads forth his hand to ask for his grace can measure it. Says Kabír, all doubts and delusion disappeared, when Hari favoured Dhru and Prahláda. O wise men, this moment his hour shall never return even though you give millions for it. A human incarnation is most difficult to attain. The bee (soul) has no friend nor companion, but leaves the world alone and friendless. Why are you sleeping, get up. Time is flying fast, says Kabír, sing the praises of Govinda, all this show is false. See how insane I am, that I am hankering after life. Time has destroyed even Siva, Sanaka, Brahma and other Munis; even gods and demons who wielded the sceptre of the three worlds, have been

destroyed. Time ate them all, but even it was also destroyed. The physician is sent for and speedily he comes and says something, holding the arm of the patient; but no one has ever given such a medicine as made the body immortal. Vedas, Puranas, the Koran, books, Pandits and Mullahs have all been questioned, but none has made me a jot less or more. I have wandered over all the world, and ransacked every place; but, says Kabír, the only medicine for the evils of life is singing the praises of Hari." So popular was Kabir with both the Hindus and the Mohammedans, that each claimed him to belong to them and on his death half his remains were burnt by the Hindus and a place still known as Kabir Chaura dedicated to him by the then Raja of Benares, while the other half were buried by the Mohammedans at Maghar, near Gorakhpur, where he died. Kabir's sayings and songs are still in everybody's mouth, and the services of his followers are often characterized by deep devotion and religious feeling, and most of them are men of good character and lead pure lives.

Nabhaji, the author of Bhakta Mal, who according to some was a contemporary of Akbar and according to others flourished two centuries earlier, has given us a good account of these people's reformers, and after Kabir we notice Mira Bai one of the greatest devotees and the only poetess of Northern India.

Mira Bai. She was the wife of Raja Kumbha Karana of Chittore and flourished about 1420 A.D. Tradition says that her devotion to Krishna exposed her to much persecution on the part of her husband and his relations, but she remained firm, and that when a cup of poison was brought to her to drink, she drank it off like Socrates cheerfully, repeating the name of her favorite deity. Some of her songs are very popular among Hindus, and she is reckoned as one of the greatest devotees of Krishna. For sweetness and depth of feeling Mirá's songs occupy a high place in Hindi literature. "I have thrown away like water the fear of the world or of the family. Do you hide the women of your own household, I am another's. I have been pierced through the heart with the dart of Krishna's love, Mirá is dancing before the Lord and is clinging to his feet."

"I am mad for Krishna, no one knows my disease. It is only the wounded who knows the trouble of the wounded; my beloved's

chamber is on the cross, how can I reach it? Mirá's Lord is Girdhar. He is verily her physician."

"Mine is verily Girdhar Gopal, no one else. He who has the crown on his head, the conch, the discus, the club and the lotus in his hands, and a garland over his neck, is my Lord. Father, mother, brother, relations have I none. I have left off my family's fear, what can any one do to me. I have lost all fear of the world in the company of the good. Now the report has gone forth and every one knows of it. I have nourished the creeper of love with tears. Mirá is the slave of her beloved Girdhar, come what may."

The last two songs are very popular in Hindu society.

Dadu.

Dadu, the cotton-carder, reformer of Sambhar in Rajputana, who lived about 1600, was also a people's reformer, and the Dadupanthis are still found in large numbers in Marwar, Ajmere and other parts of Rajputana. Their chief place is Naraina; they carry a rosary and wear a peculiar kind of cap which each one must manufacture for himself. The Nagas of Jaipur who number many thousands and are a formidable fighting class of people, belong to this sect. Dadu's teachings were similar to Kabir's. "O foolish man, God is not far from you. You are ignorant but He knoweth everything and is careful in bestowing it. Oh, my friend, recognize that Being with whom thou art so intimately connected; think not that God is distant, but believe that like thy own shadow He is ever near thee." The services of the members of this order are full of devotion, and they are generally men of good and pure characters.

Chaitanya.

About this time Bengal also witnessed a great revival of Krishna-worship under Sri Chaitanya who flourished in Navadwip between 1485 and 1533. Chaitanya is believed by his followers to be an incarnation of Vishnu and his teachings still exercise a vast influence over a large portion of the Hindus of Bengal. Chaitanya was originally called Nimai and was a great Pandit, but gave up all pride of learning and left off everything for devotion to God. His earliest companions were two of his fellow-students, Mukanda and Ganga Dhara. They were joined by Sri Bas, a Pandit and a great devotee, and Nityanand, an ascetic, who had come to him on hearing of the depth of his devotion. These men became mad with devotion, and persecution did not daunt their

spirits. The party of Chaitanya now increased in numbers and people from all classes began to join it. Even Mohammedans became followers of the great devotee of Nadia. Hari Dass was a Mohammedan. Jagai and Madhai were Brahmins who had been discarded from all good society on account of their crimes. Keshav Bharti was an old ascetic, who had initiated Nimai into the mysteries of Sanyasa. All these became his devoted followers. Nimai was now known as Sri Chaitanya. He then went to Orissa and converted Sarva Bhauma Pandit, a great Vedantic scholar, and Ramanand Rai the Raja of Orissa. On his way to Brindraban he converted two of the most powerful ministers of the Nawab of Bengal, Birkhas and Dabirkhas, who thenceforth became great Vaishnavas and were known as Rup and Sanatan. His followers had now vastly increased in numbers and he reached Mathura accompanied by a large party. He then returned to Bengal and passed the remaining years of his life in Orissa and died at the age of 48, leaving to the world an example of fervent devotion seldom met with in religious history.

Chaitanya left no writings, except a few verses known as the Shikshashatakam. I give some extracts from them.

"Singing the glory of Krishna polishes the mirror of the heart, quenches the terrible fire of the world, makes the flower of good fortune open, gives life to the bride of wisdom, makes the ocean of bliss full, fills at every step the mind with the ambrosia of happiness, and leads to unity with the self of all. He who is meaner than a blade of grass, who bears all and even more than all like a tree, who does not himself care for honour, but gives honour to others, he should always sing the praises of Hari. I do not, O Lord, covet friends, wealth, women, or poetry. Let me have unselfish love of God in every birth. I am neither a Brahmin, nor a ruler of men, nor a Vaishya, nor a Sudra, nor a student, nor a householder, nor a forest recluse, but the slave of the slave of him who is devoted to the feet of Sri Krishna, the ocean of bliss."

It is thought by some European writers that Chaitanya by ignoring caste, prohibiting the use of animal food and sacrifices and teaching Bhakti as the road to emancipation—reflected the spirit of Buddhism. His life does not, however, show that he had come into contact with Buddhistic influences. He was one of those fervent natures which burn with devo-

tion, and by the very force of their faith in God attract mankind to them. Some of his followers who were found in Navadip (Nadia) and Brindraban (near Mathura) observe caste, while others who are called *Vaishtabs* to distinguish them from Vaishnavas, do not. The dividing line between Saivism and Vaishnavas is not so much the worship of Vishnu on the part of the latter, and of Durga on the part of the former, as scrupulous avoidance of animal food and strict observance of purity. In this respect some of the Vaishnavas present a noble example. Not only in Brindraban, but elsewhere also are met men of pure and lofty character, and great scholarship among the followers of Chaitanya. In Mathura and Brindraban, where Krishna-worship is the chief feature, although in the great temples you only see costly shows and empty ceremony, it is in the quiet haunts of Govardhana, Radhakund, Nandgram and Barsana, which still remind the pilgrim of the Braj of old, that a true Vaishnava is found here and there. Some of these men have relinquished all for devotion to Krishna, and present a pleasing contrast to the irreligious tendencies of many of our educated people on the one hand, and superstitious beliefs of the generality of the masses on the other.

Nanak.

The great Sikh reformer Sának, who flourished between 1469 and 1539, and whose great work, the Granth Sahib or the Adigranth, is the canonical book of the Sikhs, comes next. His saying, "Nának dukhiá sab sansára, jo sukhiá so náma adhára (O Nának, every one in this world is unhappy, it is only the name of the All-supporter, that is happy)," is in the mouth of every Hindu. Whatever he has written or said is marked by the deepest piety and the most fervent devotion. Says he, "His name is Truth, the Creator of all things, fearless, void of enmity, the timeless entity, not born from a womb, self-existent. In Eternity Truth was, in the beginning of the Yugas Truth was, Truth now is, Truth, O Nának, shall ever be. By repeated meditation, even though I meditate a hundred thousand times, I cannot attain Him. He is not attained by abstraction even though I persevere in it. The hunger of the hungry is not appeased, even though the wealth of the universe is brought together. Not a thousand dexterities, nor even a hundred thousand avail. How can I become the Truth, how tear off the veil of

error? We should walk in obedience to the command of the Almighty, and in accordance with what is written. Form is by His decree, His decree cannot be otherwise. . . By His command are high and low. By his command are happiness and misery. By His command one is saved, another wanders forth. Every one is under His command, no one is beyond it. He who reflects upon His command cannot, O Nának, utter 'I.' I have only one request to make, O Lord, O Thou Fountain of Mercy, make me the servant of the good. Every morning let me serve the feet of Thy devotees and see Thee. Let my body and mind be devoted to the service of others, and my voice sing the praises of Hari. Let me at every breath remember my Lord, and remain always in the company of the good. There is verily only one refuge for me, Nának, go to it. The wind is the guru, the water is the father and the broad earth, the mother. The days and nights are two nurses who fondle the world. Good and evil come and go. The actions of every one overtake him, whether far or near. Those who meditate upon the Náma (name), cross the ocean of misery, Nának, they are purified and released. The most sacred Dharma is to repeat the name of Hari, the best action is to seek the society of the good, which wipes off all evil thoughts, the best determination is always to repeat the name of Hari, the best speech is to sing the sweet praises of Hari, and the best place is where the name of Hari is uttered."

"Yogis find Him through Yoga, the wise through knowledge, but Nának finds Him who is the abode of mercy, through devotion. Neither saints nor ascetics nor men of wisdom know the ways of Him who in a moment makes a king a beggar and a beggar a king, makes void fulness and fulness void, assumes various forms, and is yet above all, beyond the reach of thought, the All-powerful Creator of all. Those who do not obey the directions of the true Guru are miserable in all the four Yugas. See how foolish they are, that they do not know the person in their house (self in the body). In spite of this they are beguiled by their own egotism. Those who are cast off by the true guru are never honoured elsewhere. Alas! they never utter the true *Word* which fulfills all desires. O my heart, always see Truth within thyself. If thou dost so, thou shalt be released from all trammels of birth and death, and shalt see the Word pervading all. Innumerable are the

creeds, sects, observances and books; countless are those who devote themselves to Yoga, sing the praises of the Lord, or betake themselves to asceticism of diverse description. Countless again are those who walk apart from truth and commit various crimes. Countless are the names of God. I am tired even of saying the word *countless*. That alone is good which Thou approvest of. Thy glory is indescribable. Thou art the ever-abiding formless One."

Sikhism. The teachings of Nának culminated into the great Sikh movement, and the spirit of martyrdom which Mahommedan persecution aroused in some of their leaders, is unparalleled in Indian history. Nának was merely a preacher of purified Hinduism, and it was reserved for his ninth successor, Guru Govind Singh, to cut the Sikhs off from Hinduism by discarding the sacred thread, and the rules observed at the births, marriages and deaths of the Hindus and from Mahommedanism by insisting upon their not wearing a cap, nor eating meat killed in the Mahommedan fashion and forming them into a close fraternity. They were to have their hair uncut and eschew tobacco. What the result of this organisation was, every reader of Indian history knows. At present persons following the Sikh creed in its entirety are rare, even though there are more than two millions of Sikhs in India. The most zealous Sikhs are the *Akalis*, while the others either observe the chief ordinances of Guru Nának and Guru Govind Singh, and avoid the use of tobacco or cutting the hair, or while professing a devotion to the tenets of the Guru, still observe the usages of the Hindus. The story of the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Singh, who was summoned by the Emperor Aurangzeb in 1732 and offered much inducement to embrace the creed of the Prophet, but stoutly refused to do so, is very popular in the Punjab. Teg Bahadur was put in prison and cheerfully bore the horrors of prison life. There he repeated the following verse: "Be anxious for that which comes to pass unexpectedly. Such is the way of the world that nothing here is stable. That which is born, must die to-day or to-morrow. O, Nának, sing the praises of God, leaving off everything as a snare! My mind is devoted to the lotus feet of God. If it turns towards evil, let it be brought back by the *Sabda* of the Guru. If you take hold of one by the

arm, do not forsake him, but give your life for him. Says Guru Teg Bahadur, let the body fall, but do not forsake duty." Other instances of martyrdom in the history of the race show what sacrifices these men made in the cause of Hinduism, how a father and son vied with each other for sacrificing their lives when bringing the corpse of Teg Bahadur out of the prison, how the two sons of Guru Govind Singh and others preferred death to renouncing their ancestral faith. A recent writer has summed up the tenets of Sikhism as follows: "It prohibits idolatory, hypocrisy, caste exclusiveness, the concremation of widows, the immurement of women, the use of wine and other intoxicants, tobacco-smoking, infanticide, slander, pilgrimages to the sacred rivers and tanks of the Hindus; and it inculcates loyalty, gratitude for all favours received, philanthropy, justice, impartiality, truth, honesty, and all the moral and domestic virtues known to the holiest Christians." It would be difficult to point to a more comprehensive ethical code. It is, however, doubtful if the ordinary Sikhs follow such a strict code, and Sikhism is ordinarily not very distinguishable from Hinduism.

The clerical or monastic portion of the Sikhs consists of Nirmalas, Udasis, Suthra-shahis, &c. The Udasi sect was established by one of the grandsons of Nának, and has still a large number of followers in its ranks They never beg nor give up dress altogether, and are often well off. Their services consist of recitations from the Granth Sahib, singing of songs composed by Nának, Kabír, Surdas, &c. The chief object of worship is the Granth Sahib, and one often feels highly pleased, and sometimes leaves a better man after attending their meetings. Some of them have now set up as expounders of orthodox Hinduism. But the great majority are Vedantins. The Nirmalas, observe their vows more strictly than the Udasis. Many of them are even greater Vedantic scholars, and have written several important works on Hindu philosophy. The Udasis are not above pomp and show, but the Nirmalas have none of either. It is to the select few of these two classes of Hindus that the credit of setting an example of practical philosophers in these days of superstition and form, may be said to be largely due. The Sikhs of the Guru Govind Singh sect, are also very numerous, forming 51 per cent. of the whole Sikh population, and they profess to keep

up the traditions of their founder in both social and religious matters.

Other Hindu Sects. Of the other Hindu sects the Charandasis and the Gharibdasis only deserve mention. Charandass was a Dhusar, who lived in the reign of Shahjahan in a village called Dahra, near Rewari, in the Punjab. He was a great exponent of Krishna-worship, and his *Swarodaya*, a treatise on the regulation of the breath, is very popular. His Bhagtisagar is also good, and contains some beautiful songs. The followers of Gharibdass are generally mendicants only in name, and are often men of wealth. All these sects are a mixture of the devotion of Kabír and Ramanand, and the Vedantism of the Upanishads and Sankara.

These are some of the principal Hindu sects flourishing in Upper India now-a-days. Between Nának and Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, there were no religious reformers, though, from time to time, poets and thinkers who set noble examples of devotion or sought to impress upon the people the value of pure religion, were not wanting.

Sur Das. The great master of Hindu song, Súr Dás, the blind bard of Brija, was one of them. He lived at the court of Akbar in 1560 A.D., and his songs exercise an influence over the lives and thoughts of the people of Upper India, which is as lasting as it is deep in character. Men, women, and children are all heard repeating or singing them, and from the palace to the cottage Súr Dás is upon everybody's lips. In fact, he is the founder of the Krishna-worship among the people. He made a vow of composing a lac and a quarter of songs in honor of Krishna, but when, as the tradition tells us, he was struck with blindness before finishing his task, Krishna himself came and completed it. These latter songs all conclude with Súrshyám as the name of the composer, while Súr Dás's own compositions conclude with the word "Súr" only. There is, however, no doubt of the fact, that Súr Dás was one of the greatest masters of the art of singing. For depth and originality of feeling, fervent piety and an ever present sense of and the purest attachment to the object of his worship, he stands unrivalled among the worshippers of Krishna. For rhythmistic flow of verse and gracefulness of style, he was

par excellence the foremost Hindu musician of his age, and in so great a veneration is his memory held, that the little hut where he is said to have lived in Brindraban, is still preserved and visited by thousands of pilgrims every year. Though it is not possible to preserve the beauty of the original in the translation, yet I venture to give a few of his songs:—"All days are not the same. Past actions give their fruit O, my foolish mind, give up all sorrow. One day there is a pile of wealth equal in height to Meru in the palace of Rájá Harishchandra, the next day he is the servant of a Chandála, receiving the cloth covering corpses carried to the burning-ground. One day Rama goes about with Jánki in the Pushpaka car, another day he wanders about in the jungles weeping for her. One day Yudhishthira is on the imperial throne with Sri Bhagwán (Krishna) serving him, another day his queen, Draupadi, is in the hands of the Kaurava Dushasana, pulling her by the hair. One day the bridegroom goes to marry his bride surrounded by pomp, another day he is being carried as a corpse to the crematorium. When residing in the womb of the mother, man got his future all marked out for him. O, Súrdás, exertion is useless, what fate has ordained is true."

"Hari is my refuge. No other ceremonial or meditation is there for this Kali period. Nárada, Suka, Sankara and others found only this much butter after churning all the Srutis. Actions and attributes are all spread like a net in every direction. But, O Súr, it is singing the praises of Hari alone that lightens all earthly burdens. So long as the True One is not meditated upon, so long the mind wanders forth in search of the necklet which is over its own neck. The fool sees his own dirty face in the mirror, but thinks the mirror to be dirty and tries to clean it. There are the oil, the lamp, the wick, and the fire, but not till the lamp is lighted, is there light, nor is darkness destroyed. When the pure thought comes, the past is regretted. The blind does not know the splendour of the sun, till his own vision is restored. Let one wander in ever so many births, but let him always have love for Thy lotus feet. May he hear Thy praises, like the peacock the roaring of the clouds, may he drink the nectar of Thy name, like the *chatáka* bird the precious drop from heaven, may his eyes see Thy splendour, like the *chakor* bird, the full moon. May faith reside in the lotus of his heart. May his nose always smell the fragrance of Thy

glory. May his actions be always devoted to Thy service. O Lord, give to Súr love for singing Thy praises. The shelter of Rama's name is great. The Lord destroys the sin of those who seek Him and extends to them His grace. In His presence the high and the low become equal. Do not, O Lord, consider my faults. You are called *Samdarshi* (seer of all as equal). You can extend to me Your grace if you chose. Some are styled streams, some streamlets, full of dirty water, but when they all become united in one, they assume the name of the divine stream of Ganga (Ganges). One piece of iron is used in the *púja*, another by a butcher. But the philosopher's stone knows no distinction and turns both into pure gold. Do you remove all this net of Máyá and carry me across the river of life, otherwise it is being wasted. Save me, O Lord, this time. You are the Lord of Lords. You are called the Great Giver. Who is there meaner than me, who devoid of good actions and blind from birth? You are the protector of the three worlds. I am Your slave. You have saved the high and the low, do you extend Your grace to me also. I am the lowest of the fallen. My sins are so heavy that Ajámil's sins count nothing against them. Dharma disappears on hearing the mention of my name. Hell is wide open for me. I have no place to go to, do you take care of Your slave. Do you not now turn away from me. I, Súrdás, shall only consider You true if You save a sinner like me."

A very large portion of Súrdás's songs deal with Krishna's boyish sports in Brija, but he has also left some songs of pure divine love which bear witness to the fact that his creed was a deep, pure and abiding faith in Krishna as an incarnation of the Deity.

Tulsi Das.

The next great master of Hindi literature, Tulsi Dás, also called Gusáín Tulsi Dás, may be said to be the founder of the worship of Ráma in Upper India. He lived in the time of Shahjahan, the Mogul King of Delhi, about 1600 A.D., and was a resident of Rajpur in the Banda district. His Rámáyana is more popular among the masses of Upper India, than is the Bible among the masses of Europe. As he says he did not follow Válmiki only in writing it, but also took his materials from the various Purános, the Sastras and the Vedas, and composed it in Hindi for his own satisfaction. The Rámáyana is a great, perhaps the greatest, work in Hindi literature, and it is read everywhere, from the palace to the cottage

Tulsi Dás's other works also breathe the same spirit as the Rámáyana, and he often rises to the loftiest strains of thought, breathing the purest spirit of Hindu philosophy. I give a few extracts from his works :—

"O, Scion of the Raghu race, you are the friend of the distressed, the ocean of bliss, and the mine of mercy. Hear, O Lord, my heart is burning with three kinds of fever, and is running mad. Now it is bent upon Yoga, now upon worldly enjoyments. Now it pines for separation from a beloved object, now under the influence of delusion, it cherishes feelings of revenge. Now it is all compassion, now a poor miserly beggar, now a proud monarch, now a fool, now a conceited learned man. Now a man of wisdom devoted to virtue, now it sees the world full of wealth, now of enemies, now of women. This delirium of the world, which causes intense pain, is not destroyed without the grace of Hari. The control of the senses, the various regulations, repetition of mantras and performance of penances, are all good medicines for this disease, known as the sansara, but none of them can eradicate it thoroughly without the grace of Ráma's feet.

"I have fixed my mind on Thy feet, knowing that the Puránas and the Srutis have sung Thee alone as the disinterested friend of Thy devotees. I have met with many a father, mother, wife, son, relations and friends, wherever I was born. But they were all devoted to their own selfish objects and loved me from impure motives. None taught me to sing the praises of Hari. Gods, munis, men, demons, serpents, kinnaras, whom have I not bowed to after assuming this body? But though I have been burning with the three descriptions of fever on account of my sins, none gave me relief by destroying them. In return for unceasing efforts for pleasure, I always got pain, because I did not serve the feet of the Lord. Now I stand like a boat in the dry bed of a river, surrounded by the sorrows of the world. Consider, O Lord, this condition of mine, which is due to my having forgotten Thee, the source of all happiness. Now do not be angry and extend Thy grace to me. Tulsi Dás is at Thy feet.

"O my heart, thou wilt repent when the time is past. Having attained this human body, which is so difficult to attain, serve the Lord with act, word and thought. Kings like Sahasrabáhu and Ráwana did not escape the powerful destroyer, Time. They collect-

ed money and built palaces, saying, 'I,' 'I,' but had to leave the world empty-handed. Know sons and wife to be devoted to their own ends, do not be attached to them. They will leave thee in the end, why dost thou not leave off attachment to them even now? Now be attached to the Lord and relinquish all bad desires. O Tulsi! Desire is never quenched by enjoyment, like fire by clarified butter.

"This is the essence of all religions. O my heart, this is the true mantra to be learnt by thee, be devoted to Ráma. In the regions of the serpents, of men or of gods, whether king or beggar, whoever repeats the name of Ráma, crosses the ocean of life. The various fasts, penances, and vows enjoined by the Vedas, are never equal in efficacy to repeating the name of Ráma. Shambhu, Nárada, Vyása, Brahma, Ganesha, Bhushanda the crow, and Jatáyu the vulture, all sing his praises. Says Mahadeva to Parvati, "Keep the name in thy heart." O Tulsi Dás. It is its power which washes off all impurities of Kali.

"There is no difference between God with attributes, and God without attributes. So say the saints and sages, the Vedas and the Puránas. That which is without attributes, without form, beyond the reach of thought, becomes associated with attributes out of love for his devotees. But how can that which is without attributes become associated with attributes? Just as water crystallized into ice is not different from water. But how can one whose name, like the sun, disperses darkness, become associated with delusion? Ráma, who is the sun of truth, intelligence and bliss, can never be touched by the night of delusion. In the Lord, whose nature is light, there can be no cloudiness of understanding. Joy, sorrow, knowledge, ignorance, are all attributes of the individual soul possessed of the sense of 'I.' Ráma is known in the world as the all-pervading Brahma, all bliss, the Lord of all, and the ancient (Purusha)."

"Fools do not know their own delusion, but senselessly attribute delusion to the Lord, like foolish people who, seeing the sky clouded, say that it is the sun which is dim; or, seeing the moon through their own fingers, say that it looks double. O Umá, delusion is attributable to Ráma in the same way as darkness, smoke or dust to the sky. Inanimate objects, the senses, individual souls and the gods possess various degrees of intelligence. But he who

illumines all, and is above all, is the eternal Ráma, the Lord of Avadh. The world is the object, and Ráma the Lord of the Máyá and the abode of all attributes is the Sun which enlightens it. By his Power, this delusion, though unintelligent, appears to be intelligent, under the influence of Máyá. Just as the mother-o'-pearl appears to be silver, or as the rays of the sun cause the mirage, so is this delusion; but though false in the past, the present and the future, it can never be got rid of. In this way the world depends upon Hari, yet though unreal it causes pain, just as one seeing his head cut off in a dream is in pain till he awakes. He whose grace destroys this delusion is verily, O Girjá, the merciful Lord of the Raghu race. It is He whose beginning and end no one ever knew. The Vedas sing of Him according to the limit of their comprehension. He moves without feet, hears without ears, acts variously without hands, tastes without a mouth, without a tongue; he is the ablest of speakers, touches without a body and sees without eyes, and smells without a nose. In this way are all his actions beyond the ken of men; his glory no one can describe . . . He is the Sovereign Lord of all creation, animate or inanimate, my Lord Raghubar who resides in all hearts. By even unintentionally mentioning his name, man washes off sins of many lives. What of him who remembers Him with reverence? He crosses the ocean of life easily like a puddle on the road." (Tulsi Dás's Rámáyana Bálkand.)

"I speak with certainty, and my saying is not otherwise, that those who always sing the praises of Ráma, crosses the ocean of life which is so difficult to cross. You may extract *ghi* out of water or oil from sand, but no one can get out of the Sansara without devotion to Hari. This is the established truth." Tulsi Dás's influence on the mind of all Hindus of Upper India is as great as it is lasting. A vernacular poet calls Sur the Sun, Tulsi, the Moon, and all other poets mere fireflies. His style is peculiar to himself, and he has found imitators but few to surpass him in the *chaupai metre.*

Sundar Das.

Sundar Dás of Mewár, who lived in 1620, was also a great religious writer. His Sundar Kavya is largely read by every one in Hindu society.—"Know my friend, thy enemy is in thy house (within thee). Thy wife, sons and relations are all preying upon thee and eating

up thy resources from all sides. They speak to thee sweet wor[illegible] and surround thee. But in adversity none will be thy friend, a[illegible] they will all disappear. Therefore, says Sundar, all this world [illegible] a vanity and disappears like a dream."

Girdhari Kabiraya. Girdhar Kabiráya of the N.-W. P., Doab, who was born in 171[illegible] was another great poet of Hindi. His Kundal[illegible]yas are deservedly famous. Says he: "Do n[illegible] be proud of your wealth even in a dream. It [illegible] fickle, like water, which never stops in one place. When wealth is s[illegible] fickle, earn good repute while you are in the world, speak swe[illegible] words to all and be humble. Says Girdhar Kabiráya—Ever[illegible] one shall bear witness to the fact that wealth is a thing of a fe[illegible] days."

"Forget the past and look to the future. Fix thy mind in wha[illegible] thou canst perform easily. Fix thy mind in what thou canst perform lest the evil-minded should laugh at thee and thou mayest have to fall back. Says Girdhar—Just think of what will be for future good, let bye-gones be bye-gones."

"The moment thou forgottest thy own self, thou becomest miserable; an object of dishonour and bereft of glory. Bereft of glory, thou art driven from house to house. Now goest thou to Kedar, now runnest to Mecca. Says Girdhar Kabiráya—Swinging in the cradle of infidelity, thou talkest nonsense and forgettest thy own wealth."

Religious revival in the Deccan. In the Deccan also poets and devotees, like Tuka Ram and Nam Deo, did what Tulsi Das and Súr Das did in Upper India.

Says Mr. Ranade: "Roughly speaking, we may state that the history of this religious revival covers a period of nearly five hundred years, and during this period some fifty saints and prophets flourished in this land, who left their mark upon the country and its people so indelibly as to justifiy Mahipati in including them in his biographical sketches. A few of these saints were women, a few were Mohammedan converts to Hinduism, nearly half of them were Brahmans, while there were representatives in the other half from among all the other castes, Marathas, *kunbis*, tailors, gardeners, potters, goldsmiths, repentant prostitutes and slave-girls, even the outcaste Mahárs. Much of the interest of this religious upheaval is centred in the fact we have noticed above, as

they indicate plainly that the influence of higher spirituality was not confined to this or that class, but permeated deep through all strata of society, male and female, high and low, literate and illiterate, Hindu and Mohammedan alike. Those are features which the history of few other countries can match or reproduce, unless where the elevating influence is the result of widespread popular awakening. In Northern and Eastern India, a similar movement manifested itself much about the same time. Nanak stirred up the Punjab to rise, and made a supreme effort to reconcile Hinduism with Mohammedanism. Chaitanya, in the Far East, sought to bring men back from the worship of *Shakti* and *Kali* to the faith of the *Bhagwat;* while Ramanand and Kabír, Tulsi Das and Súr Das, Jyadev and Rah Das contributed each in his own way to the work of spiritual enlightenment. This influence has no doubt been great and abiding, but it cannot be compared with the work done by the saints and prophets of Mahárásh-tra. The names of Changdev and Dnyandev, Nivritti and Sopan, Muktabai and Jani, Akabai and Venubai, Namdev and Eknath, Ram Das and Tukaram, Shaik Mohammed and Shanti Bahámani, Damaji and Udhao, Bhanudas and Kurmdas, Bhodle Bawa and Santoba Powar, Keshav Swami and Jayaram Swami, Narsingh Saraswati and Rang Nath Swami, Chokhamela and the two potters Narahari, Sonar and Savatia Mali, Behiram Bhat and Ganesh Nath, Janardanpant and Mudhopant, and many others that might be cited, furnish an array which testifies to the superior efficacy of this movement in Maháráshtra. The Brahmans in these parts furnished a much larger proportion of saints and prophets than was the case in any of the other parts of India, where the Kshatriya and the Vaishya caste furnished a much larger contingent than the Bráhmans." (Ranade's Rise of the Maratha Power, pages 146—148.)

Namdeo said :—" There is none high or low with God. All are alike to Him. Never entertain the thought that I am high-born and my neighbour is low or high. The Ganges is not polluted, nor is the wind tainted, nor the earth rendered untouchable, because the low-born and the high-born bathe in the one or breathe the other, or move on the back of the third." (*Ibid*, page 153.)

" This religious movement gave us a literature of considerable value in the vernacular language of the country. It modified the strictress of the old spirit of caste exclusiveness.

It raised the *Sudra* classes to a position of spiritual power and social importance, almost equal to that of the Brahmans. It gave sanctity to the family relations, raised the status of woman. It made the nation more humane, at the same time more prone to hold together by mutual toleration. It suggested and partly carried out a plan of reconciliation with the Mohammedans. It subordinated the importance of rites and ceremonies, and of pilgrimages and fasts, and of learning and contemplation to the higher excellence of worship by means of love and faith. It checked the excess of polytheism. It tended in all these ways to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity, both of thought and action, and prepared it in a way, no other nation in India was prepared, to take lead in re-establishing a united and native power in the place of foreign domination. These appear to us to be the principal features of the religions of Maháráshtra, which saint Ram Das had in view when he advised Shivaji's son to follow in his father's footsteps and propagate this faith, at once tolerant and catholic, deeply spiritual and yet not iconoclastic." (*Ibid*, pp. 171, 172.)

The Brahmo Samaj.

We now come to the religious reform movements of the last century. The name of Raja Ram Mohan Rai is familiar to all students of Indian reform. He was born in 1774, learnt Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and English, filled various posts under Government, and was Dewan of the Collectors of Bhagulpur and Rangpur. In 1813 he retired from service and devoted himself to the social and religious amelioration of India. Bengal was at the time the victim of immorality and corruption of the Saktas (the worshippers of Sakti). Vaishnavism had vastly degenerated. Suttee, female infanticide, and other evils were largely prevalent in Hindu society ; ignorance and superstition were rampant, and education was at a very low ebb. To remove these evils, Ram Mohan Rai addressed himself. He proved that the Vedas inculcated the unity of God, and discarded idol-worship. In 1830 he established the Brahmo Samaj, and shortly after left for England as an ambassador to the king to Delhi, and died at Bristol in September 1833. As Max Müller says in his biographical essays, "Ram Mohan Rai was a *true* prince, a real Raja, for Raja also like Rex meant originally the steersman, the man at the helm." Ram Mohan Rai's

work did not die with him, but bore fruit in saving many an Indian from the destructive hand of other religions. His religion professed to be a universal religion, but it was reserved for his great follower Keshab Chandra Sen to make it so in practice. Keshab Chandra Sen's life is too well known to need detailed notice. He was born in Calcutta in 1838, studied in the Hindu College there from 1845 to 1858, devoting himself chiefly to the study of mental and moral philosophy. He joined the Brahmo Samaj in 1857, and after serving as a clerk in the Bank of Bengal, devoted his life to the service of the Samaj. His lecture on young Bengal was the means of saving many a young man from the pitfalls of Western education. He then took missionary tours in various parts of Bengal, North-West Provinces, Ceylon, and Bombay. The effect of his eloquence was electric. In 1865 Keshab seceded from the Adi Brahmo Samaj and established the Brahmo Samaj of India. In his lecture upon Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia, he showed that Christ's influence swept away the impregnable strongholds of error and the accumulated corruptions of centuries. In 1870 he went to England, where he delivered a remarkable lecture on England's duty to India. He had an audience with the late Queen and returned to India in 1870. He now introduced into his Samaj the asceticism and the religious devotion of the Rishis of old. The marriage of his daughter with the Maharaja of Cooch Behar led to a revolt among his followers, resulting in the establishment of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Keshab had in the meantime been brought under the influence of Paramhans Ram Krishna, and in 1881 declared his religion to be the religion of the New Dispensation.

He died on the 8th January 1884. The *Indian Mirror* newspaper which he established in 1861, is now a power in the land. But the Brahmo Samaj is fast dwindling down. In the last census there were only 3,171 Brahmos in Bengal, but some of them are very influential men, and comprise some of the best men in the country. They believe in the unity of the Godhead, the brotherhood of man, and direct communion with God in spirit, without the intervention of any mediator. The Adi Brahmo Samaj is essentially Hindu in character and does not allow inter-caste marriages. The church of the New Dispensation, now under the leadership of the Venerable Pratab Chandra Mozumdar, allows inter-caste marriages and assimilates the teachings of Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and

Buddhism, while the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj rejects the system of caste altogether, recognizes and permits inter-marriages between castes and discards the *purdah*. It is like the New Dispensation eclectic in its teachings.

Later religious Reformers.

Swami Vivekananda and through him the late Professor Max Müller have made Paramhans Ram Krishna of Dakkhineshwara known to the world. He was born in 1836 and died in 1886, and his teachings exercised much influence over all who were brought within their good influence. Says he, "when man realizes one of the following, he becomes perfect. All this am I. (2) All this art Thou. (3) Thou art the master and I the servant. Humanity must die before divinity manifests itself. But this divinity must in turn die before the higher manifestation of the blissful mother takes place."

Ram Krishna believed that all religions were true, and though each of them took account of one aspect of the undivided eternal essence, knowledge and bliss (sachchidananda), they all seemed to him to indicate the way of arriving at Him. He founded no sect, but has left his mark upon the minds of not only many in this but in other countries also. His disciple Vivekananda's name is too well known, both here and in Europe and America, to need detailed notice and for bringing the truths of Hinduism home to western minds, his speeches and writings stand unrivalled. Vivekanand died in 1903, but the work he started, flourishes and promises to bear fruit as time goes on.

The Arya Samaj.

The movement which next claims attention is the Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Daynand Sarswati. He was born in Kathiawar in 1827, left home at the age of 21; first devoted himself to the study of Yoga philosophy and then studied under Virjanand of Benares. He commenced his missionary work about 1863, and held great public discussions in various parts of India, and established the Arya Samaj in 1875. He undertook a new Commentary on the Vedas professing to give a monotheistic interpretation of the Sanhita portion, and completed the one on the Yajur Veda. The Commentary on the Rig Veda was left incomplete. In his chief work, the Satyartha Prakasha, he explained the principles of his religion and enunciated ten principles which to this day are the articles of

faith of his followers. He was a dualist and believed God to be All-knowledge, Infinite, Almighty, Just, Merciful, Omniscient, Immortal. The soul is also incorporeal and unchangeable, but distinct from God, and Moksha (release) is the state of release from pain and subjugation to birth and death, and life, liberty and happiness in the immensity of God. The Mantra portion of the Vedas is inspired. The Brahmans and the Upanishads are not inspired, and the Puranas are mythologies and stories not entitled to any weight. Heaven and hell are states of the soul, periods of happiness and misery, not the places where it dwells. The five sacraments of the Sastras (the Pancha Mahayagya) and the sixteen Sanskaras are not only retained, but their performance is also insisted upon. The movement has not of late gained much in numbers, but is doing very good work in social and educational reform. There are altogether 92,419 Aryas in India. Of these we have but few in Bengal; in the North-Western Provinces we have 65,282, and in the Punjab, 9,105. The movement is neither numerically nor otherwise strong in Southern India.

It has now split up into two sections, one consisting of those who do not object to the use of meat as food, and the other of those who do. The latter are numerically stronger than the former, though one of the most successfully managed institutions in the Punjab, the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, is due to the exertions of the former. This section counts amongst its members some of the ablest and most self-sacrificing men of the Punjab who have relinquished all or nearly all their prospects in life, for devotion to the cause. The other party is also active in the cause of education, and have established a Gurukula near Hardwar, where students are taught much, if not entirely, after the old Hindu method. Great stress is laid upon the study of Sanskrit and the Vedas, their angas and upanagas (grammar, etymology, philosophy and cognate sciences) are all required to be studied. The medium of instruction is either the Vernacular or Sanskrit, and the boys have to live in the institution from eleven to twelve years for the first section and six for the second. They enter at the age of eight or ten, and are allowed a year's travelling at the close of the course. English is either dispensed with altogether or retained as an alternative course, and Government examinations are avoided as far as possible. But how far this institution is likely to be successful in

these days of examinations and English education, is a question. The experiment is rather bold, but if it succeeds, it may produce something like the Brahmacharis of the good old times.

Unlike Hinduism, the Arya Samaj is a propaganda, and seeks to bring into its fold not only the orthodox Hindus, but the lower classes and men of other persuasions also. Only the other day it converted a Mohammedan teacher in the Punjab to its faith. But how far this will be tolerated by those of its members who still retain caste, or whose friends belong to the orthodox party, remains to be seen. The Samaj's opposition to idol-worship, shradhas, pilgrimages to sacred places and gifts to Brahmins has excited the enmity of the orthodox party, and any reformer who goes beyond the pale of the most conservative Hinduism, is nick-named by the latter as an Arya Samajist It has, however, put orthodoxy on the defensive, though the latter in trying to defend the old order, often shuts its eyes to proved facts and circumstances. A movement known as the Dharam Mahamundal has thus sprung up of late years, headed by some of the princes and chiefs of India. But it wants the organization and the spirit of the more progressive reform association, and has not been able to do more than flatter the vanity of those who are wedded to the past by appealing to Dharma, irrespective of the altered circumstances of Hindu society. It may be, that the Arya Samaj is numerically nothing as compared to the orthodox party, but it is a force to be reckoned with.

The Radha Swami Sect.

Another movement of modern times is the Radha Swami sect, founded by Swami Sheo Dyal Singh of Agra, better known as the Radha Swami. In his lifetime the sect did not gain much in numbers, but in the leadership of his disciple, Rai Saligram Bahadur, late Postmaster-General of the North-Western Provinces, it made much progress. Its followers numbered about 16,000 at last census. It is an eclectic sect recognizing the teachings of former religious reformers, like Nanak, Kabir, Dadu, Tulsi Das, Maulana Rum, etc. It, however, places Radha Swami above all. Its first division of the universe is the Radha Swami Desa, the abode of pure spirit unconnected with matter; its second division is spirit existing in combination with pure matter, the Suddha Sachidananda of the Vedantists, the Nirvana

of the Buddhists, and its third division is where matter predominates over spirit. This is the God of most religions of the world. But neither the Vedantists nor the advocates of Nirvana will concede the position assigned to Brahma or Nirvana which is expressedly declared to be spirit entirely uncontrolled by matter, and is nothing more than the first divisions of the Radha Swamis. How far the followers of other religions will accept the positions assigned to them by this sect, is also doubtful. The Radha Swamis believe in Sabda and Sruta, two very familiar practices for all students of Yoga. The Guru is supreme, and nothing is too good or great for him. His leavings of food, and the water in which he has bathed or which he has drunk, are all sacred, and are distributed as Mahápársad. This has brought some strong opposition to bear against the sect on the part of the orthodox Hindus, and they have been nicknamed as Kurapanthis, or those who eat leavings—a thing looked down upon by all Hindus.

This is a brief sketch of the religion of the Hindus as taught in its original sources, of how various reformers have, from time to time, tried to restore it to its pristine purity and of the success they have met in this direction. We shall now take a cursory glance at (1) the popular Hinduism of the present day, (2) at its result upon the lives and thoughts of some of its best followers in times past as well as in times present, and (3) at the ideal to be aimed at.

II.—Popular Hinduism of the Present Day.

Vishnu.

The five principal gods of the orthodox Hindu of to-day are Vishnu, Siva, Sakti (Durga), Surya (Sun) and Ganesh. Below them come others—all evolved either from the impersonal gods of the Vedas and personified and invested with all the attributes of humanity, or brought from some of the non-Aryan deities and incorporated into the Hindu Pantheon. Vishnu is mentioned in the Rig Veda as the "All-pervading, All-encompassing Deity." "Through all this world strode Vishnu, thrice he planted his foot and the whole was gathered in the dust of his footsteps. Vishnu the

guardian, whom no one deceiveth, made three steps and established the dharmas. Look ye upon Vishnu's works, where he, the closely-allied friend of Indra, has let his holy ways be seen. That is the supreme abode of Vishnu which the wise always behold, spread as it were, like an eye in heaven. That supreme abode of Vishnu, the most sublime, holy singers, always vigilant, sing." (Rig Veda I – 22, 17 to 21.) The three steps of Vishnu seem to be no other than the three worlds : the gross, the subtle, and the causal ; and his supreme abode his own true nature – Brahm—without attributes. (Nirguna Brahman.) In the epics and the Puranas, however, we find him invested with various forms and descending upon earth from time to time for the restoration of dharma. The Rámáyana mentions Rama as an incarnation of Vishnu, how the gods distressed at Ravan's increasing prosperity, implore his aid, and how he promises to go on earth in the form of Rama to destroy the iniquitous king of Lanka. In the Mahábhárata these incarnations are mentioned in greater detail, and in the Puranas they are described in all their fulness. The first incarnation was the Varah or the Boar in which Vishnu raised the earth which was underneath the ocean. Here he was called "the body of sacrifice (yagyanga)." The second was the fish (Matsya), in which he saved king Satyavrata, the seven rishis and their wives from being swallowed up in the universal deluge. The third was the tortoise (Kurma) in which he stationed himself at the bottom of the ocean, and allowed the Mandara mountain's point to be placed upon his back, to serve as an axis in which the gods on one side and the demons on the other with the mountain for their churn and the serpent *Vasuki* for their rope, churned the waters for the Amrita (water of life). The latter appeared with the Dhanwantri, the physician, carrying it, and when the gods and demons began to fight for it, Vishnu assuming the form of a beautiful damsel, however, so stupefied the demons that the gods, with the exception of two demons who had smuggled themselves among their number, had the whole of it. The fourth incarnation was the Narsingha (man-lion) in which Vishnu delivered the earth from the tyranny of Hiranykashipu and sprang out of a pillar where the latter had tied his son Pralahada. The fifth was Vaman (dwarf) where he solicited from king Bali, who had become very powerful, as much earth as he could cover by his three steps, and on his request being granted, covered the heaven and the earth with his two

steps and placing his foot upon the head of Bali, drove him into the Patala, where he was allowed to reign. The sixth was Parusharam in which he cleared the earth of the Kshatriyas, thrice seven times, and gave it to Kasyapa. The seventh was Rama in which he destroyed powerful Rakshasas, like Ravan, Kumbh Karana, and Indrajit. The eighth was Krishna or Balrama for the destruction of Kansa and other powerful and evil-minded Rakshasas. The ninth was Buddha for spreading the net of delusion among the enemies of the gods! The tenth Kalki, is yet to come, mounted on a horse, drawn scimitar in hand, for the purpose of destroying this present world of impurity and restoring the age of purity. In addition to these chief avataras Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya system, Vyasa, the compiler of the Vedas, Dhanvantri, the founder of the Hindu system of medicine, the two great rishis, Nara and Narayana, who lived in the Himalayas. and were known for their realization of Brahman, king Prithu after whom the earth is called *Prithvi*,—in fact all that is glorious, effulgent or powerful, is looked upon as an incarnation of Vishnu, or as partaking of his essence. The description of his person, as given in the Puranas, is "a comely body of perfect shape, and dark hue, a high forehead, eyes like the full-blown lotus, a smiling face, a neck like the conch, a broad chest, four arms reaching the thighs, a navel falling in graceful folds, well knit thighs - the embodiment of power, might and loveliness. Decked with a crown on the head, ear-rings in the ears, the *Vaijayanti* garland on the neck, the kaustbha gem resplendent on the chest, the conch, the discus, the mace and the lotus in his four hands, and wearing a yellow robe Vishnu so contemplated gladdens the hearts of his worshippers by smiles and benevolent looks." This is the form in which he is to be meditated upon by the pious and the devout.

These incarnations seem either to present in an allegorical form the process of evolution from the lowest to the highest forms of life or to describe various changes in ancient Aryan society in its struggles with the aboriginal races of India. The fish évolves into a tortoise, the tortoise into a quadruped, the quadruped into half man half animal, the partial man into diminutive man, the diminutive man into man with passion in full force, the man of passion into one with good predominating, he into one who is above both good and evil, the same in all conditions, the Jiwan mukta ; and finally he into one who would have no release

for himself till all the world is saved. The wise and the learned in India have, however, always been the worshippers of Vishnu, in his impersonal aspect. " He is the one Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe, as the Timeless, the Spaceless, the Causeless Entity, the Primeval Purusha who resides in the hearts of all, as the Truth, Infinity and Bliss itself. In the Mahábhárata, Bhishma in reply to Yudhishthirá's questions as to what religion was the foremost of all religions, what god was to be worshipped of all gods, who was the supreme refuge of all, who saves mankind from the evils of life, tells him that it is by worshipping Vishnu, meditating upon him, singing his praises, sacrificing unto him that man reaches the supreme. And Vishnu is the 'self of all without beginning or end, and free from passion, delusion and enmity.' The Sastras say that 'Vishnu is Siva and Siva Vishnu. Vishnu worships Siva and Siva Vishnu,' and the meaning is not that one worships the form of the other, but the Divine essence of the other. That Vishnu was not so much an object of personal worship as impersonal worship, is also proved from the fact that while we meet temples of Ram and Krishna in large numbers everywhere, and one or two of Narsingh, Varah also, there is none dedica ed the great god as such. Sects are called Vaishnavites or Saivites, but the temples are always of Vishnu's one or other incarnation. Vishnu-worship as inculcated in the Sastras is the worship of the Deity in the heart, not with bells and gongs in temples, nor with costly feasts or grand festivals or processions in his honor, nor of heads of sects called after his name, but of the meek and the humble who serve him by serving humanity as partaking of his essence. The words *Bhagvan Vasudeo*, mean He in whom dwell sovereignty, might, glory, splendour, wisdom and non-attachment, in all their fulness, who knows the origin and end of all, who is knowledge itself, who is above nescience (Avidya), who dwells in all and in whom dwells all."

Vaishnavism is the most popular of all systems of worship in India, appealing as it does, equally strongly to the layman and the anchorite. The Vishnu Sahsranama (thousand names of Vishnu) is read by every pious Hindu every day, and many are the stories of the exploits of the great God current in popular literature. Dhru, the son of king Uttanpada, is taunted by his step-mother as to his not being the heir to the throne, and therefore not entitled to

sit in his father's lap, leaves home and meditates upon Vishnu, who gives him the highest place in heaven. Prahlada is persecuted by his father Hiranyakashipu for being a devotee of Vishnu. The father makes various attempts to kill the son by fire, poison and sword. But Prahlada always comes out safe. He is now tied to a pillar, and the father asks him to point out his Deity whom he believes to be omnipresent in the pillar, and Vishnu comes out of the pillar in the form of Narsingh and kills Hiranyakashipu. An elephant, who is attacked by a crocodile in a river, appeals to Vishnu and is saved. Many of these stories, like the story of Dhru and Prahlada, have been dramatised, and are produced upon the stage to the instruction of the people. Prahlada, Narada, Bhisma, Hanuman, Udhav, Arjuna, Yudhishthira, Mira Bai are all held up as models of devotion, and many are the songs and legends of special interventions of the favorite Deity for warding off the troubles of his followers. Tulsidas and Sur Das Singh of Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavs, having been saved from dishonor by the lengthening of her cloth when her enemies were pulling it by the intervention of Vishnu ; of Ajamila, a sinner, having been saved by remembering Him in the hour of death ; of Krishn having accepted the poor fare in Vidura's house as a gift of love in preference to the costly entertainment of king Duryodhana. Vishnu-worship is thus a religion of love and devotion (Bhakti and Prem), and though it has much degenerated of late, yet if followed in its true spirit it is a religion immensely calculated to raise its followers to the loftiest heights of spirituality.

Siva.

The next great object of popular worship is Mahadeo (the great god), also called Siva, Maheswara, Rudra, etc. In the Rig Veda, there is mention of Rudra as "the wise, the conqueror, the god with the firm bow, who thinks of beings of the earth, who commands all heavenly beings." He is invoked for saving his worshippers and their progenies from injury. "Slay us not, nor abandon us, O Rudra ; let not thy noose, when thou art angry, seize us, preserve us ever more with blessings" (Rig Veda I-46.) "In the Yajur Veda he is mentioned as living on the mountain (girishanta), as the supreme declarer of truth (adhivaktá), as the chief of the gods (daivayah), as the healer of all (bhishak), as of a pale hue and blue-necked, endowed with all the six attributes of power."

(Chapter 16.) These descriptions were more of the sun, than of Siva of later mythology, and yet they have come to be applied to him. In the Rámáyana there is no mention of Siva, except in the Uttarakanda where Ravana worships him and sings his praises, with eight hundred holy names. But the portion where this occurs (Uttarakanda, Chapter 17) is apparently an interpolation. In the hymn which Ravana addresses to the great God, there is a mixture of the personal and the impersonal, which is scarcely in keeping with the ideas of worship current in those times. In the Mahábhárata Siva becomes a recognized god of the Hindu Pantheon. But the descriptions given of him seem to show that he was a non-Aryan chief possessed of great might, a master of Yoga, and greatly venerated by his contemporaries, both for his yoga prowess as well as for his feat of arms. When invoked by Arjuna for imparting to him the Pashupata weapon, in order to destroy his enemies, he appears disguised as a Kirata (Bhil), and holds the great Pandava hero down in combat, till the latter sets up an image of Siva and worships it, only to find the offering going to the Kirata. In the great conflict Siva is said to have guarded Arjuna and Krishna in an invisible manner.

His retreat was in the Himalayas in a beautiful spot resounding with the chant of Vedic hymns, and surrounded by persons devoted to asceticism. The great God here lives surrounded by a ghastly company of spirits with the daughter of Himvata by his side. Of white hue, like the full moon, with matted locks, a snake for his sacred thread, a tiger-skin round his loins, clad in the same garment, at once causing fear to all by his fierce aspect, and dispelling fear by his mild aspect, he is described as having four or five faces (the various quarters), three eyes, the sun, the moon and the fire, blue throat on account of his having swallowed the *halhal* poison, a bull to ride upon, and more fond of the company of the dead than of the living. From him the master of Yoga the latter descended to successive generations of men. He is the first originator of music and grammar and is ever absorbed in his own self. As the very embodiment of the knowledge of Brahman, he says, "He who placing his self within himself, is free from all sense of mine, who walks about without a covering for his person, along the path of heroes, of righteousness and penances, who lives in the practice of goodness, having

renounced everything, who has his senses under control, he attains to regions which are reserved for heroes." (Mahábhárata Anusasana Parva, Chapter 142.) In the Puranas and the Mahábhárata, he is also mentioned as having destroyed the sacrifice of the patriarch Daksha. But while in the Mahábhárata there is no mention of Virabhadra, his agent, having killed Daksha, or Sati his wife having given up life by yoga process on seeing him dishonored, the Puranas mention both these facts and even say that when solicited by the gods he placed a goat's head on the body of Daksha when restoring him to life. This tradition is largely current in Hindu society, and is believed to be true. His next great exploit was the conquest of Tripura—the triple city. It was a city of iron, silver and gold, encompassable by gods and mortals. But Siva destroyed it by one shaft shot from his terrible bow, the Pinaka. The allegory represents the gross, the subtle and the causal body, and its conquest by the efforts of the individual self through Yoga in order to find its rest in the Supreme self. Siva makes the earth, and its forests his battle-car, the four Vedas his four steeds, the supplementary Vedas the bridle bits, the Gayatri and the Savitri the reins, the syllable Om the whip, Brahma the driver, Vishnu the shaft, Agni the arrow-head and Vayu the wings of the shaft. At one stroke he pierces the triple city and destroys it, and is next seen as a child with five locks of hair on the lap of Uma. Indra wishes to strike him with his thunderbolt, but his arm is paralyzed. The meaning, of course, is that the conquest of the self can only be accomplished with the aid of knowledge of the Vedas, and constant meditation of the Om, and the single shaft is that final stage of Samadhi where the yogi destroys all sense of the phenomenal, and rising above it, is thenceforth a child nursed by Brahmavidya. The waves of wordly passion try to assail him, but are paralysed and secure he sleeps in the lap of his nurse. This is the explanation of the allegory as given by Nilkantha, the commentator of the Mahábhárata. Siva is represented as a Brahmacharin (*urdharetas*), with his vital seed drawn upwards. This, in later times, has come to mean the worship of his emblem the Phallus. As in the case of Vishnu, the Sastras repeatedly declare him to be identical in essence with Brahman. Says Krishna: "He is Agni, He is Rudra, He is Indra, He is the Moon, He is Time, He is the maker of all, He of universal form, of immeasurable soul, sometimes manifesting Himself singly

sometimes dividing Himself into various portions, He is the great god unborn." (Mahábhárata Anusasana Parva, Chapter 160.) In the Suta Sanhita, in a beautiful dialogue, Siva explains the religion of the Upanishads, and says : "I am neither the body nor the vital breaths, nor the organs of sense, nor mind, nor the principle of egoism, nor the five elements, nor the five objects of perception, but *Siva* alone, bliss itself. Wonderful it is, that man, forgetting the supreme treasure within himself, wanders about like a child under the influence of delusion, drinking poison when there is nectar for him to drink."

This is the real Siva of the Sastras, and those who follow him may as well go under the name of Vaishnavites as Saivites. No sectarianism which causes all the difference and dispute was ever inculcated by Mahadeva. "I am a Saivite, you are a Vaishnavite," was unknown either to Vishnu or Siva. Sectarianism arose when Siva-worship, like Vishnu-worship, became a matter of form than a realization of that goal of all religion which Siva and Vishnu taught. In Benares every street is full of Siva temples. Its famous golden temple attracts thousands every hour of the day. But here, as everywhere else in India, there is more worship by flowers and incense and verbal repetition of mantras, than real worship of Siva in the heart. Saivism is the religion of Gyana as distinguished from the religion of love which Vaishnavism is and, rightly followed, it, like the other, leads its follower to the same goal. The greatest of Gyanis (the knowers of self), who have been followers of this religion, never recognized Siva and Vishnu as different. Sankaracharya, for instance, was as great a worshipper of the one as of the other, and this should be the spirit in which the two great aspects of God should be approached now also.

Sakti.

The third most popular object of worship is Durga or Kali. In the Vedas there is no mention of either Kali, Durga or Lakshmi. The Dawn is invoked "as the daughter of heaven—the world's imperial lady" (VII—75-4); but there is nothing of the destruction of the demons by Durga, or the goddess of wealth, being the wife of Vishnu. Savitri is worshipped, but she is the Gayatri, nothing more. In the two epics also there is no trace of Durga or Sakti. It is only in the Puranas that so much importance is assigned to her exploits. From the accounts given in these

treatises, it appears that it is a worship of Prakriti (nature) in various forms, benign as well as terrific. In her benign aspects she is worshipped as Durga, Lakshmi, Mahálakshmi, Sarswati; in her terrific aspects as Kali. As Mahálakshmi she is described as living in the Vaikunth, the world of Vishnu; as Parvati in the world of Siva; as Sarswati in the world of Brahma. By destroying the demon Raktabíja, she became known as Kali. She is Savitri, the mother of the Vedas—the Máyá of Vishnu, the Vishnu Bhakti. Sakti-worship is thus nothing, but the worship of the creative principle in nature. In the Puranas, Durga is described as of dark color, with three eyes, eight arms, carrying a sword, a mace, a quoit, a spear and other weapons, decked and armed, ready to fight the demons. She first kills Mahisasur who had given the gods much trouble, and is applauded as the "goddess of prosperity, in the homes of the virtuous, as the bringer of evil fortune among the vicious, as the intelligence of the wise, as the faith (sradhá) of the good, as the modesty of the modest, as possessing the three attributes which create the world, as the Brahmavidya of those who wish to achieve emancipation." Her next exploit is her famous encounter with the demons Chand, Munda and Raktabíja, and finally with Shumbha and Nishumbha. In the hymns which the gods sing in her honor for these victories, she is described "as the mother of the Universe, as the Sakti of Vishnu, as the source of all the Vidyas, as the Universal intelligence." There is here thus a mixture of the personal and the impersonal, but nothing of that Tantric worship which has brought Saktism into such disrepute. On the contrary, as explained by the commentator of Devi Bhagwat in his introduction to that Purana, "the Devi is nothing but a form of Brahm himself. He is the supreme abode of the Mahadevi. She has two aspects, the *saguna* (with attributes) and the *nirguna* (without attributes). In her former aspect she is worshipped by those who are attached to the world; in her latter, by those who are not attached to it. She is *Chiti*, the supreme Intelligence. It is not the Máyá that is to be worshipped, but the substratum of Máyá that is to be worshipped. On certain occasions Brahma may be meditated upon with the Sakti predominant; on others He may be meditated upon as the Sakti in subordination to him. In the former it will be Sakti-worship, in the latter Brahma-worship. But in both not

different from Brahma." The very first verse of the Devi Bhagwat, therefore, describes the Devi as *Sarva chaitanya Rupá*—the Universal Intelligence, as the *ádyámvidyám*, the primeval knowledge. Sakti-worship was thus originally a pure system of worship, and without any justification for the disgusting orgies of its later followers which have tended to degrade it. In Bengal the Durga Puja is a long-cherished institution of Bengali society. But in the Puja as now performed, there is less of the worship of the goddess, than of friends and guests with shows and entertainments of various description. In the temples of Durga or Kali, both in Calcutta and elsewhere, animal sacrifice is common, though it is a question how far even the Puranas which inculcate Durga-worship sanction it. The allegorical character of the system is patent to even a casual observer. Durga is the Prakriti or nature who fights and conquers in the person of Mahishasura and other demons, the various powers of evil which stand in the way of her evolution. She is also the Brahmavidyá who, enshrines herself into the heart of her votary, by driving out the demons of delusion, avarice and passion, and on finding herself incapable of conquering one state of the mind by another, drinks the blood of the demon (the lower mind) by *nirbija samadhi* (complete suppression of the mind). If this explanation is in accordance with the spirit of the Sastras, as I believe it is, Sakti-worship ought to be given a higher meaning, capable of exalting the mind and purifying the emotions, before it can command any votaries in modern India.

The Sun (Surya).

The worship of the Sun is also a very old Aryan institution. In the Vedas, as we have already seen, they worshipped the Purusha within the sun, as "I am He" or "He is I." This is the real meaning of the Gayatri mantra, and the Upanishads inculcate the same. In the Rámáyana the worship of the same Purusha is also repeatedly enjoined. So it is in the Mahábhárata. "He is the eye of the Universe, the soul of all corporeal existence; the refuge of those versed in the mysteries of the soul, of those who wish for emancipation, as the embodiment of light and intelligence and knowledge, as the lord of the universe, as Brahmá, Vishnu, Prajapati, as the subtle mind, as eternal Brahman." (Vana Parva, Chapter 3.) Even the Puranas which inculcate the worship of the physical sun do not quite lose sight of the fact. He is there

invoked not only as the deity riding in a car of seven steeds, with a resplendent body throwing his rays all round, decked with ear-rings of resplendent beauty, as the bearer of the wheel, as going from the Udaya to the Asta mountain, but also as the "self of the universe, as who resides in the heart of all from Brahma to a blade of grass, who regulates the affairs of the world, who is the indicator of time, the giver and taker of waters, who awakens this world from the sleep, as it were of death, and who makes it follow the path of the good." (Bhagwata.) All Hindus worship him daily, and his worship is even now the purest form of worship in India.

The last but not the least popular of Puranic gods is Ganesha.

Ganesha.

There is mention of Ganesha in the Yajurveda (23-4) where he is invoked as "the lord of Ganas (hosts), as the sustainer of those who are dear to him, as the lord of happiness, as the Prajapati who is his votary's protector like the universal self." In the Mahábhárata he becomes the *amanuensis* of Vyasa, and is called "the obviator of obstacles, the fulfiller of desires, the guide of the *ganas*." He agrees to write Vyasa's work, provided his pen did not stop. Vyasa accepts it, provided Ganesha understood what he wrote. Ganesha begins the work, and while he is writing, Vyasa now and then brings in a difficult verse which sets Ganesh a-thinking, allowing Vyasa time to compose other verses. Ganesha thus signifies wisdom, and the fact of the Puranas having placed an elephant's head on his shoulders, is unsupported by the older Hindu authorities. He is now invoked, as the remover of obstacles, and is worshipped as the first of all gods. Nothing can be done without first worshipping him, and where there is no image, a piece of clay does duty for the occasion, and the mantras recited are the Vedic mantras mentioned above.

The *nava graha*, or the nine planets, are also worshipped at all

The Nava Graha.

Hindu ceremonies. These are the sun (Surya), the moon (Chandra), Bhúma-suta (Mars), Budh (Mercury), Guru (Jupiter), Sukra (Venus), Sani (Saturn), and Rahu and Ketu. The sun has already been described. The moon is represented as "white like a *sankha*, produced from the ocean of milk, and gracing the forehead of Mahadeo; Mars as bright like lightning, a young man armed with a spear, Mercury as dark like the blossom of the Priyangu flower, and blessed with the attribute of serenity; Jupi-

ter as shining like gold, the preceptor of the gods and the rishis, and the intelligence of the three worlds; Venus as resplendent like the thread of the golden lotus, the preceptor of the demons and the teacher of all the Sastras; Sani as possessing a shining body, dark like a blue mountain, and the son of the Sun and the brother of Yama; Rahu as having only half a body possessed of great strength, the destroyer of the light of the sun and the moon, and Ketu as red like the *palasa* flower and of a fierce aspect. All these are worshipped with offerings of water, flowers, incense, sweets, dresses and money.

Each Hindu has, however, one (favourite god) *isht devta* whom he places in the middle and the others on the sides while worshipping all.

The Ganges.

Ganga (the river Ganges) has ever been an object of great veneration throughout India. She is the "river of the gods" (Sursarita), with three streams (the tripatha gamini), one going to the heavens, another to the earth, and the third to the nether regions. Her waters are universally believed to be the means of giving emancipation to those who bathe in them, drink them, or even touch them, and to this day it is the wish of every Hindu to lay down his bones on the banks of Mother Ganges. From long distances bones of the dead are daily brought to Hardwar and other places on the Ganges and thrown into the river, in the belief that to do so secures the dead a seat in heaven. When the Hindu dies the water of the Ganges is poured down his throat. If a place is rendered impure, Ganges water purifies it. The best retreats of the learned, and some of the most populous towns of India of the past, have always been on the banks of the Ganges. Hardwar, Prayaga and Benares derive their sanctity from no other source. The risk of journeys to Badrinath, Kedar and Gangotri are cheerfully borne by the young and the old because of the sight of the magnificent river before their eyes. And, indeed, the water of no river in the world has such salubrious properties nor such fertilizing power. Mahomedan kings who demolished everything Hindu, drank Ganges water brought from long distances. European chemists declare that it is *the* one water which does not admit of multiplication of unhealthy microbes. The Gangetic-Doab has always been the most favoured tract of India, and the Ganges has been the favourite theme of

Hindu bards from Kalidass and Valmiki downwards. Her descent from the Himalayas, typified as the foot of Vishnu, her having been received by Sankara in his locks and allowed to wander there for years, representing her twists and turns in those regions, till king Bhagirath prayed for her descent and brought her to the plains, representing his making more a regular channel for her, her passage there from Hardwar to the sea, in order to carry the sons of Sagar, who had been burnt by the rishi Kapila, to heaven, are all sung by Sanskrit and vernacular poets. Says Sankara: "O goddess, may I worship Krishna on thy banks, drinking thy waters, free from all longing for wordly objects. Thou destroyest all calamities, thou art the ladder of heaven." Says Valmiki: "O mother! O daughter of the mountain who deckst the earth like a garland, who art the road to heaven, I bow unto thee. O Bhagirithi! may I always live on thy banks drinking thy water, enjoying the sight of thy waves, repeating thy name, may my body fall in this way." Says Kalidass: "O goddess! those who live on thy banks, who have no pride, who are wise, who have purified their bodies by scanty and well regulated meals, do not care for palaces, built by hundreds of kings surrounded by beautiful damsels and having all the enjoyments of the world." The day of Ganga's descent on the earth, the 10th of the light half of Jeth, and the day of the full moon of Kartik are observed as festivals throughout India, and the crowds who go to bathe in the river on such occasions and the religious spirit which animates them, show how great is the hold upon the popular mind of this most sacred river of India. At Lachman Jhula or Badrinath with the river now rushing in torrents, now running like a smooth lake with its clear blue waters reflecting the rays of the sun, with the air of stillness all round, and the birds of the trees for his companion and the Himalayas frowning above, one feels that the *rishis* of India were not wrong in calling the Ganges the ladder of heaven, for here, by contemplation of the grand mysteries of nature, and man, the world with its troubles and sorrows, its trials and competitions, disappears from the view.

So strong is the popular belief in the spiritual efficacy of the Ganges that both in private life as well as in the courts, people give up cherished claims on the other party denying them by holding Ganges water in his hands, or swearing by

the Ganges. In the Mahábhárâta it is said that the "Gitá comprises all the sastras, Hari all the gods, and the Ganges all the sacred places," and the same is the belief of the Hindus to this day. Therefore when one has done something great or difficult of accomplishment, he says, "I have bathed in the Ganges," meaning his trouble is over.

The religion of the masses.

These are, however, all sastric gods. Below them we have quite a medley of beliefs and worship from godlings of nature, like the earth, water, fire, rivers, mountains; godlings of disease, like the small-pox; ghosts, spirits of the dead, departed heroes, trees, animals, *suttis* (women who have burnt themselves at the funeral piles), saints and fakirs, both Mahomedan and even of the lowest castes of Hindus; tools and implements of trade; cattle used in agriculture; - All these claim and obtain reverence from the Hindu according to the needs and exigencies of the hour. Local deities, however, command more worship from the masses than sastric gods. This is especially the case with Sitla (small-pox). Some of these deities have certainly been brought from Non-Aryan sources. Others are survivals of Vedic mythology. The two objects of universal reverence are still the Brahmin and the cow, and though the former have vastly degenerated, yet the ordinary Hindu cherishes the belief of gifts to Brahmins being the only means of securing future bliss. The cow is everywhere held sacred, and commands divine worship now as it did in the time of the Mahábhárata; and a gift of a cow to a Brahmin is still looked upon as a very meritorious act. Recital of the Vishnu Sahsranama is a most popular means of propitiating the deity, and the Satya-Narayan Katha is recited by a Brahmin either on the day of full moon or as occasion requires for propitiating evil. Hardwar, Benares, Prayaga, Pushkara, Gaya, Jagannath, and Badrinarain are all as great places of pilgrimage now as before. Prayaga attracts thousands of people to bathe in the Triveni in the month of Magh every year. Pushkara is looked upon as the king of all Tirathas by all orthodox Hindus of the present day. Gaya is specially sacred in securing bliss to departed ancestors, and thousands offer *pindas* every year that make the fortune of its *pandas*. The tradition that Rama here offered obla-

tions to his ancestors and secured them everlasting bliss is largely believed.

Badrikasrama has always been a sacred resort of the Hindus from the time of the Mahábhárata downwards, and although no temple is mentioned in that epic, the asrama of Nara Narayana which was there, and the sanctity of the place are repeatedly recognized. It is the land of asceticism (*tapobhumi*) of India. The temple of Jaganath is also not mentioned in the older Hindu sastras, nor even the Puranas, though attempts have been made to trace the institution to the Vedas. The place seems from all accounts to be an adaptation of Buddhism or Saktism, or both, to Vaishnavism. There is nothing to correspond to the images of Jaganath, Balbhadra and Subhadra in any of the sastras, nor is that absence of cast restriction and freedom in the matter of eating and drinking which forms such a unique feature of that temple, recognized elsewhere. The temple at Puri dates only from the twelfth century, and the first mention of Jaganath is in the fourth century. When I visited the place I tried to find out some more historical facts connected with the institution, but could not do so. And yet it is a wonderful institution, both for its wealth, its grandeur and its hold on the minds of the people. I do not think it is an adaptation of any non-Aryan institution or deity. On the contrary, from the fact that Durga has to be first worshipped in the temple before you can see the great God, it appears that the worship is borrowed from Sakta sources. The absence of caste distinction also points to the same conclusion. That this equality of all before the Lord of the World appeals strongly to the masses, and the poor outcast believes that there is at least one place in India where social inequality shall not place its ban upon him, is a sentiment beautifully put in in Volume X, page 438 of Hunter's *Gazetteer*. But so far as I have been able to ascertain this is not the sentiment of the people. They do not hold Jaganath sacred because there is equality of caste there, but because they believe that he, as the Lord of the World, will give them *moksha*. The place is grand in every respect. Its feeding arrangements are such that 20,000 people are fed from the *mahaparsad* prepared there every day, and when there is a rush of pilgrims, as many as two lacs can be fed. It is visited by lacs of people every year. The reliefs in the walls are very exquisite, though some of them are rather obscene, thus also showing a Sakta origin. The income of the temple is esti-

mated to be about 4 or 5 lacs of rupees a year from landed property, but the offerings of pilgrims make it thrice as much more. It has a staff of 60,000 priests and servants, and the Raja of Puri is its sweeper, and one who has been to Jaganath is still looked upon with respect in Hindu society.

Fasts and festivals also form a great feature of our daily life. Each festive occasion has its titular deity, and Shiva on *Shivaratri*, the Holika on *Holi*, Krishna on *Janama Ashtimi*, Durga in *Durga Puja*, Lakshmi and Kali on *Devali*, and others are worshipped by all Hindus. The months of Baisakh, Kartick and Magh are specially held sacred for making gifts and bathing in sacred rivers. Local festivals in honour of tribal gods are also common. Krishna-worship is, however, the most popular means of satisfying the religious instinct and gorgeous displays in the *Dola Jatra* in Brindraban, and the *Ras Lila* by specially trained people in every part of the country, always afford great delight to the masses.

All classes of people are fond of hearing the Bhagvat Purana recited by Pandits, and at great bathing fairs or places of pilgrimages, the *Saptah* (repetition of the Bhagvat in seven days, the period during which Suka recited it to Parikshata before he was bitten by the serpent Takshaka) is looked upon as a thing of great sanctity. Thousands of men and women sit for hours, listening to what they seldom understand, in the faith that by doing so, is the surest road to happiness. Reciters of Bhagvat, who study to make it attractive by citing illustrations from life, earn large sums of money on such occasions. Among Brahmins also, so great is the faith in the efficacy of Sri Bhagvata as the purifier of sins, that some of them recite it in seven days in lonely places without any one to listen to them. During such recitations both readers and the audience generally fast the whole day, and on their conclusion the readers are carried through the streets with much show and pomp.

Fasts and abstinence are even now practised by men and women in a manner almost unknown in any other country of the world. Not only the Ekadashi (the 11th day of each fortnight), or the day of the full moon, are observed as fasts, but during the rainy season women, young and old, also show a spirit of self-denial which is truly heroic. A girl of 14 would not touch salt or condiments or sugar for four months. An elderly matron would take food only every other day.

One even more religiously inclined would give up all cooked food; another would keep the Chandrayana Vrata (taking food after seeing the moon) to secure future bliss. Girls and women tenderly nurtured, brave the troubles of a journey to Badrinath or visit the nearest stream in the early hours of the morning in the coldest season of the year; all from faith in self-denial being the only road to bliss.

The Tulsi and the Aswatha trees, are held in great veneration; and people who have no children celebrate the marriage of the Tulsi with the image of Krishna like that of human beings. Belief in astrology forms one of the prominent characteristics of Hindu life. No betrothal takes place till the stars of the boy and the girl agree. No ceremony is performed, no journey undertaken, no business done, till an auspicious hour for its performance is determined by the astrologer.

Thus, below much superstition and ignorance, we have a society pre-eminently religious, and from the peasant at his plough and the beggar in the streets to the Raja in his palace, religion forms the backbone of every one's daily life. Modern education has shaken the religious beliefs of some, but the mass of people, specially the women, in spite of their low education, are as deeply religious as ever. Even the most ordinary Hindu on rising up in the morning repeats the name of Rama, or other favourite deity. If he has time, or is so inclined, he goes to bathe in the local river or tank and performs some worship in a temple close by. In the day time he has always something to spare for beggars that come to him. In the evening it is common to see men of even the lowest classes singing religious songs in company. Those higher than they hear Puranas recited by Brahmins, or repeat Rama, Rama, or worship at some temple. To the ordinary Hindu money which goes in charity or towards building a temple, a bathing ghât or a well, is money well applied, and "fruitful are the earnings of the good which are devoted to the service of God," is his cherished belief. Nothing is too good to secure future bliss. The great mass of our people are never atheistic. The law of karma and future life possesses for all a reality never seen elsewhere. The Mahanirvana Tantra sums up the characteristics of the follower of this religion as follows :—"He is a speaker of truth, having his senses under control, devoted to the good of others, free from evil passions, possessed of good

thoughts, free from malice and hypocrisy, compassionate, of a purified disposition, dutiful to parents, ever listening to Brahma, ever thinking of Brahma, ever bent upon realizing Brahma. His senses under control, his intellect firm, always seeking Brahma, never speaking a falsehood, not entertaining an evil thought, the follower of Brahma should avoid all intercourse with another's wife. Always saying *Tat Sat* at the commencement of everything, he should say at the time of eating and drinking, 'let it be dedicated to Brahma.' " (III-99-108.) This is the ideal of modern Hinduism.

The code of morality, of even the ordinary Hindu of the present day, is not more lax than that of one in the same position in any other country of the world. He is not less truthful, nor less mindful of duty or honor or chastity than his compeer elsewhere. Even in the courts he is not given to lying more than one with similar surroundings in any other country. In business, he is not less honest than any tradesman or merchant elsewhere, and those huge commercial frauds which now and then convulse the western world, are unknown in India. Before the advent of western civilization advertising was unknown in this country and written contracts were rare. The books of a banker were accepted as true without enquiry, because forgery was never practised. Contracts once made were never denied, and local opinion was much feared. *Panch Parmeshwar*, *Panch Mil Khuda Mil*, or five men constitute God's tribunal, are common proverbs in Hindu society, and a witness who would lie in an English court would not do so outside it. Perjury, forgery, fraud, murder, rape are still looked upon with horror, even though Hindu society is not the simple and truthful society it once was, and self-interest and faction often blind it to truth and justice. The mass of our people, though vastly degenerated, still possess many virtues and qualities which claim admiration, many a trait of character which might well be imitated by more civilized people of modern times. They are less selfish, less mindful of personal comfort, less devoted to the present than the more highly educated of modern times. Drunkenness is unknown, except in the lowest classes of India. The standard of female honor is here as high as, even higher than elsewhere, and unchastity is looked upon with more horror both by men and

women than in other countries. We shall illustrate this by describing briefly the lives and thoughts of some typical Hindus, both in times past as well as in times present.

III.—Hinduism Illustrated in Practical Life in Times Past and Present.

Foremost amongst kings stands Harish Chandra, the very embodiment of Truth, whose motto was that the sun and the moon may leave their places, but he shall never relinquish truth. The story of his having given the whole of his kingdom to Viswamitra, and then sold himself and his queen as slaves to find the *dákshiná* (fee for the ratification of the gift) for the Rishi, is familiar to all readers of the Puranas. Harish Chandra became the slave of a Chandala, who received clothes covering corpses carried to the crematorium. His wife became the slave of a Bráhmana. Their only child died of snake-bite, and the queen carried his corpse to the crematorium to burn, but Harish Chandra did not leave his sense of duty even in this trying moment and would not let his own child's corpse be burnt till he had received his master's share of the cloth.

Those who do not know Hindu life, might not appreciate self-sacrifice like this, and look upon Harish Chandra's action as dictated by morbid sentimentality, and his asking his wife for his master's due, a piece of foolhardiness speaking a deranged intellect. But while it may be so to others, to the Hindu the life of Harish Chandra appeals as the life of one who was the embodiment of truth and duty. And the drama of *Satya Haris Chandra* is therefore very popular on the Hindu stage.

Yudhishthira.

Ram's life has already been sketched above. Yudhishthira was another typical Hindu. Says he: "I act virtuously not from the desire of reaping any fruits from virtue, but from that of not transgressing the ordinances of the Vedas, and because I see such to be the practice of the good and the wise. My heart, O Krishná, is naturally inclined towards virtue. The man who wishes to reap the fruit of virtue is a trader in it. He is mean and ought never to be counted amongst the virtuous. He does not attain the fruit of virtue. Nor does a man of sinful heart who, having accomplished a virtuous act, doubts its efficacy, obtain the fruits of his act, in consequence of

his scepticism. I speak unto thee, under the authority of the Vedas, which constitute the highest proof in such matters, that never shouldest thou doubt virtue! The man that doubts it, is destined to take his birth in the brute species. The man of weak understanding who doubts dharma or virtue or the words of the Rishis, is shut out from all regions of immortality and bliss, like Sudras from the Vedas. Doubt not, O Krishná, the ancient religion that is practised by the good and framed by Rishis of universal knowledge, capable of seeing all things! O daughter of Drupada, religion is the only raft for those desirous of going to heaven, like a ship for merchants desirous of crossing the ocean. O thou faultless one, if the virtues that are practised by the virtuous bore no fruit, the world shall then be enveloped in terrible darkness. No one shall strive for emancipation, nor seek to acquire knowledge, nor even wealth, but men shall live like beasts. If asceticism, austerity, sacrifices, study of the Vedas, charity and honesty were all fruitless, men would not have practised such virtues generation after generation." (Mahábhárata Vana Parva, Section 31 abstracted.) In reply to a question as to what is the ancient path, he says: "Argument leads to no certain conclusion. The ordinances of the Vedas differ from one another. There is not one Rishi whose dictum is universally accepted. The essence of virtue lies hidden in the cave (of the heart). That is the path which has been trodden by the great." (Vana Parva, Chapter 313, verse 17.) When asked by Dharma, the god of righteousness, to choose a boon, he chose as follows:—"May I, O Lord, always conquer covetousness, folly and anger, and may my mind be ever devoted to charity, truth and self-restraint." (*Ibid*, Chapter 314, verse 24.) In another place he says: "Whatsoever wealth there is upon this earth, whatsoever there may be among the gods, or whatsoever there may be unattainable even by them in the region of the Prajapatis, or in the highest heaven, or in the region of Brahma himself, is nothing if not obtained by righteousness." In only one instance did he depart from truth, when at the field of Kurukshetra he said to the great Kuru warrior Drona, whose death depended upon the news as to whether his son Aswathámá was living or dead, that Aswathámá was killed, adding either "a warrior or an elephant of that name." Drona died on hearing the news, but Yudhishthira had

also to pay the penalty of his untruthfulness. In no other instance did he sacrifice virtue. Even in the closing scene of his life, after all his brothers and wife had fallen, and he was offered a journey to heaven, he declined to go alone and leave behind him the faithful dog who had followed him, saying: "Even this is my firm and steady vow. I never forsake a person who is terrified, nor one who is devoted to me, nor one who seeks my protection, saying that he is destitute, nor one who is afflicted, nor one who has come to me, nor one who is unable to protect himself, nor one who is solicitous of life. I shall never give up such a person till my own life is at an end." (Mahábhárata Mahápraasthanika Parva, Section III, verse 12.) On his way to heaven he hears cries of distress coming from the place where his wife and brothers were confined, enduring all the torments of hell. Unable to know the cause, he refuses to go alone and without them. The illusion is removed, and he is told that he was given a sight of hell for the single untruth he had spoken on the field of battle, and that having never departed from the rôle of virtue on any other occasion, nor ever swerved from truth, he was thoroughly pure. Yudhishthira's motto was, that he alone was truly wealthy to whom the agreeable and the disagreeable, weal and woe, past and future, were the same.

Bhishma.

Higher than even Yudhishthira was the great Kuru leader Bhishma, who was as great a general as a philosopher. Devotion to truth and duty, self-restraint and self-sacrifice were all illustrated by him throughout his long life in a manner unparalleled in the history of Indian heroism. His former name was Devavrata. His father Shantanu fell in love with Satyavati, the daughter of a fisherman, who would not give her in marriage till he was assured of her issue from the king succeeding to the raj. Bhishma, having come to know of his father's attachment for the girl, went to her father, and not only renounced his own claim to the throne, but by taking a vow of life-long celibacy, cut off his line of offspring, saying that even dying childless he should attain to heaven. The sacrifice brought him the appellation of Bhishma (the terrible), and so greatly pleased was his father with his filial devotion, that he granted him the blessing that he should live as long as he chose, and that death should not come to him without obtaining his com-

mand. So firm was his attachment to his vow that when, on his brother's death, no male child was left in the family, and he was earnestly solicited by his step-mother, the fisherman's daughter, to marry and rule the kingdom, he replied, "I shall renounce the three worlds, the empire of heaven, or anything that is even greater than that, but Truth I shall never renounce. Earth may renounce its attribute of scent, water its attribute of moisture, light its attribute of exhibiting form, the air its attribute of being perceivable to the touch, the sun its glory, the comet its heat, the moon its cool rays, space its capacity of generating sound, the slayer of Vritra (Indra) his prowess, the god of justice his impartiality, but I shall never renounce truth." (Mahábhárata Adi Parva, Chapter 103, verses 13 to 18.) And he continued not only true to his vow, but was always the most prominent figure in the Kuru court, both as a councillor as well as a general. At the field of Kurukshetra he fought the Pandavas for ten days, causing great havoc in their army, and so invincible was he thought to be, that it was only when he yielded to Yudhishthira's repeated requests to tell him the time and manner of his defeat and death, that he told him both and fell. Even in his last days he did not depart from his Kshatriya hardihood. Remembering that his father had given him the two boons of being incapable of meeting death in battle and choosing the time of his own death, he allowed himself to fall pierced throughout the body by the arrows of Arjuna. He did not, however, die, for the sun was then in the southern solstice, but waited till it came into the northern solstice. He would have no other pillow for his drooping head, but that of three keen shafts shot by Arjuna, nor any other water but what came out of a jet pierced in the earth by Arjuna's shafts. Lying on his bed of arrows, and surrounded by great Rishis, the old lion of the Kurus sang a hymn in the praise of Vishnu, which is truly styled the king of hymns. Its concluding portion is:—"The two syllables Ha-ri (हरि) constitute the sole provision of journey for those who have to pass through this wilderness, known as the Sansara. They alone destroy all worldly attachments, and constitute the only medicine for the sorrows and troubles of life. As truth is full of Vishnu, as the universe is full of Vishnu, as everything is full of Vishnu, so let my soul be also full of Vishnu, and my sins be destroyed." (Mahábhárata Shanti Parva, Chapter 49, verses 94

and 96.) When asked by Yudhishthira and the assembled chiefs to advise them upon the duties of kings, of the various sections of society and of the four orders, upon the character of persons in distress and the means of attaining release from the Sansara, he showed himself as great in giving advice and discoursing upon questions of polity and religious philosophy, as in the art of war. Promptness in action and truthfulness in behaviour, he declared to be the essence of all duty, and that release from the Sansara was for him, "who like the swan moving over water was yet not drenched in it, though living in the world was yet above it." According to Krishna all knowledge expired with him. The closing scene of his life was marked by the same grandeur as the opening one. In his dying moments he was assured by Krishna that he was not guilty of a single transgression throughout his life. His last words to Yudhishthira and his brothers were: "You should strive to attain truth. Truth constitutes the highest power. You should always live with Bráhmanas of righteous behaviour, devoted to penances, ever abstaining from cruelty, and having their senses under control." (Mahábhárata Anusana Parva, Chapter 167, verses 50 and 51.) His conviction was that one should "always look cheerful and contented, engaged in mental recitation of the sacred mantras, silent and devoted to a life of renunciation. Beholding the repeated formation and dissolution of his own body, and the senses that result from and resolve into their elemental essences, and observing also the repeated advent and departure of creatures he should learn to cast an equal eye upon all. He who is frugal in respect of his fare and keeps his senses under control, achieves tranquillity of self by his own exertions." (Mahábhárata Shante Parva, Chapter 278, verses 15 and 16.)

Karna and Vidura.

Among the minor heroes of Vyasa's great epic, the lives of Vidura and Karna also furnish the same lessons of truth and duty. Vidura's discourses on polity are throughout marked by the prominence given to truth and righteousness. "There is no peace," says he, "without acquisition of knowledge, performance of asceticism, control of the senses, abandonment of avarice. Let one be careful of his character. Wealth comes and goes: one deprived o wealth is deprived of nothing; deprived of character one is surely lost. He who wishes for success, should observe righteousness

Success is as intimately connected with honest performance of duty as the nectar with heaven. Sacrifice, study, gift, asceticism, truth, forgiveness, mercy and contentment constitute the eightfold path of righteousness. The first four may be performed from motives of pride, but the last four exist only in the truly great." (Mahábhárata Udyoga Parva, Chapter 34, abstracted.)

Karana's liberality has passed into a proverb. When engaged in his morning devotions, there was nothing which he would refuse to one who asked for it, and it is said that Surya, the sun-god, knowing his liberality and, having learnt of the intention of Indra, the king of gods, to go and ask for his ear-rings and coat-of-mail which had made him invincible in battle, came to him and warned him against his granting Indra's request. But Karana was unmoved, and said: "For persons like me it is not fit to save life by an unworthy act. Death itself is not fraught with such terrors to me as untruth. There is nothing which I cannot give away in charity," and true to his vow he gave his ear-rings and coat-of-mail to Indra, though at the cost of being subsequently defeated in battle. Therefore, in native society, the early morning is styled the time of Karna (Karna Samaya), and to mention a miser's or niggardly person's name is considered inauspicious.

(*b*) **Janaka.**

Another important figure in Hindu religious and philosophical literature is Janaká of Mithilá, who was styled a Rajarshi, a royal sage. His court was, as we read in the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, the resort of the wise and the learned of those days, both for receiving as well as imparting instruction in Brahma-vidya, and his discussions with Yágyvalkya show that he was able to meet the *rishi* on equal terms. In the Mahábhárata also we are told that when Vyása could not convince his son, Shuka, of the truths of Vedanta, he sent him to Janaká for instruction, and the latter instructed him. Janaká's doctrine was:—"My wealth is unlimited because nothing is mine. If the whole of Mithilá is burnt, nothing of mine is burnt." On another occasion, in answer to the question of a Rishi lady Subabhá, who had applauded a life of mendicancy and had pointed out to the king the many obstacles to happiness in sovereignty, Janaká said: "I am free from attachment, though engaged in ruling a kingdom. If emancipation follows knowledge, it can as well be attained by one holding a sceptre and wearing a crown, as by one

carrying a triple stick (sign of mendicancy). These are mere outward symbols, having no value in the attainment of emancipation." (Mahábhárata Mokshadharma, Chapter 321.) Again, in reply to a Brahman's question as to what he considered his kingdom to be, he said, "Although a (large) inhabited tract is subject to me within this ancestral kingdom of mine, yet I failed to find my dominion, searching through the whole earth. Failing to find it on the earth, I searched Mithilá (for it). When I failed to find it in Mithilá also, I then searched for it among my own children. When I failed to find it even there, my understanding became clouded. After that cloud had passed away, I recovered my intelligence. Then I thought that I have no dominion, or that everything is mine. Even this body is not mine, or the whole earth is mine. All conditions here have, in all affairs, been understood by me to be terminable. Hence I do not find that which can be called mine. (Considering) whose is this, I thought of the Vedic text about nothing being anybody's property. My understanding tells me that nothing should be (called) mine. Depending upon this notion, I have got rid of the idea of anything being mine. Hear now what that notion is, upon the strength of which I have come to the conclusion, that I have dominion everywhere. I do not desire for my own self those smells that are before my nose. Therefore the earth, the element of smell, is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self the colors or light that appear before my eyes. Therefore the element of light is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self those sensations of touch which are in contact with even my skin. Therefore the element of wind is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self those sounds which are in contact with even my ear. Therefore the element of sound is always subject to me. I do not desire for my own self the mind that is always in me. Therefore the mind is subject to me. All these acts of mine are for the sake of the deities, the Pitris, the Bhútas, together with the guests." (Mahábhárata Aswamedha Parva, Chapter 32, verses, 9—11 and 15—24.)

Vikramaditya and other Hindus of later times.

In modern times the example of Vikramaditya of Ujjain may be cited as that of a typical Hindu. Not only Hindu writers but the Mahomedan historian, Farishta also, praises his love of justice, his treatment of his subjects like his own children and his ascetic habits of life. According to Farishta the only furniture in Vikram's private apartment was a mat and a pitcher of water, and the whole of his time was spent either in the service of his people or of God. His exploits as described in the Singha San Batisi are largely read by the people, and his Samvat era is current in a large portion of India. Later on, when Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India, the women of the rich, in the Punjab melted their ornaments, and those of the poor, spun cotton to find money for the war. Allauddin Khilji's invasion of Chittor in 1303 also called forth not only the bravery of the Rajputs who saved their king, but also the historical immolation of Padmani and her companions in the vaults of that unfortunate city to escape the clutches of the Mahomedan conqueror. The Rajput women, like the Kshatriya women of the past, never looked at their husbands' or sons' faces if they turned back from battle, and Rani Sanjogita in urging Pirthi Raj, her husband, to battle, tells him: "Man is born to die; every one likes to cast off old garments for new. You should not care for your body, but for life immortal, and sword in hand should cleave your foe and I shall be your other half in heaven." The influence of Hindu ideas upon Akbar and two of his most trusted counsellers, Abul Fazl and Faizi, is known to all readers of history. Abul Fazl describes the Hindus of his time as "religious, affable, courteous to strangers, cheerful, enamoured of knowledge, fond of inflicting austerities upon themselves, lovers of justice, given to retirement, able in business, grateful, admirers of truth, and of unbounded fidelity in all their dealings. Their character shines brightest in adversity. Their soldiers know not what is to fly from the field of battle, but when the success of the combat becomes doubtful, they dismount from their horses and throw away their lives in payment of the debts of valour. Frequently they hamstring their horses to deprive themselves of the means of fight, and thus rendered desperate soon bring the battle to a successful issue. They have great respect for their tutors and make no account of

their lives when they can devote it to the service of God. They one and all believe in the unity of Godhead, and although they hold images in high veneration, yet they are by no means idolators as the ignorant suppose. I have myself frequently discoursed upon the subject with many learned and upright men of this religion and comprehend their doctrine, which is that the images are only representations of celestial beings to whom they turn themselves whilst at prayer to prevent their thoughts from wandering, and they think it an indispensable duty to address the deity after that manner." (A' in-Akbari, Gladwin's Translation, pp. 563, 564.)

Akbar's trusted counsellor, Todar Mal, whose system of land-revenue still forms the basis of assessment in Upper India, was as great a financier statesman and general, as a strict follower of Hinduism, and even wrote a book on the principles of that religion. Jehangir used to hold frequent discussions with Brahmans, and Tulsidass was granted some land by Shahjehan. Dara Shikoh, his son, translated the Upanishads and the Yoga Vashishtha in Persian, and great was the influence of Hindu ideas upon the Mohamedans of the period. When Aurangzeb levied the Jizia, the letter of protest which Rana Raj Singh of Odeypore wrote to the Emperor, shows the kind of men Hinduism produced in those days. Regarding this letter Todd, who had satisfied himself of its genuineness, says, " On the promulgation of that barbarous edict, the Jizia, the Rana remonstrated by letter in the name of the nation of which he was the head in a style of such uncompromising dignity, such lofty, yet temperate resolve, so much of soul-stirring rebuke, mingled with a boldness and tolerating benevolence, such elevated ideas of the divinity, with such pure philanthropy that it may challenge competition with any epistolary production of any age, clime or condition." "If your Majesty," says the letter, "places faith in those books by distinction, called divine, you will there be instructed that God is the God of all mankind, not the God of Mahomedans alone. The Pagan and the Musulman are equal in his presence. Distinctions of colour are of his ordination. It is He who gives existence. In your temples to His name the voice is raised in prayer; in a house of images where the bell is shaken, still He is the object of adoration. To vilify the religion or customs of other men, is to set at

naught the pleasure of the Almighty. When we deface a picture we naturally incur the resentment of the painter, and justly has the poet said, " Presume not to arraign or scrutinize the various works of power divine." (Todd's Rajsthan, Vol. I, pp. 3, s 354—35.)

Sivaji, the founder of the Mahratta supremacy, is described by foreign historians as a robber and plunderer. Hindu writers, however, look upon him to be as great in war as devoted to the principles of religion. So great is said to have been his love of hearing the Mahábhárata and the Rámáyana recited by Pandits, so fond was he of listening to the lectures of Ramdass, that he often endangered his life for the purpose. He was very strict in his observances of religion, and not only gave his subjects of all classes the fullest liberty of conscience, but when his own son Sambhaji cast an evil eye upon a Brahman girl, he immediately put him into prison. Ahilya Bai, the famous princess of Indore, who ruled that principality for a period of thirty years, from 1765 to 1795, during one of the most troublesome periods of Indian history, also furnishes a good example of what a really good Hindu ought to be. She was as courageous in battle as wise in internal administration. Her charitable institutions are found in almost all places of pilgrimage, and the people of Malwa still worship her as a goddess and a divine person.

I need not multiply instances. The few that I have mentioned will show that pure religion alone has inspired the best men of the country, both in times past as well as in times present, to deeds of philanthropy, patriotism, martyrdom and religious or social reform. Now-a-days also, our best men, like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Ranade, have also been most religious men. Vidyasagar carried his crusade against prohibition of widow-marriage, and Ranade his fight against social disabilities under no other impulse. Mahadeo Govind Ranade was born in 1846, graduated in 1866, and, after filling various offices under Government, ultimately became a Judge of the High Court, which office he filled with great distinction till his death in January 1901. He was a Mahatma, a great soul, in every sense of the term, one of those men who appear in a country at intervals to put new life into dead institutions, to rouse the sluggish to action, and to show by example what persistent effort is capable of

achieving. He was as wise as he was learned, as much a lover of everything good and noble, as persistent in urging his countrymen to follow it. Says he: "Whether in political, social, religious, commercial, manufacturing or æsthetical spheres, in literature, science and arts, in war or in peace, it is the individual and collective man who has to develop his powers by his own exertions in conquering the difficulties in his way. If he is down for the time, he has to get up with the whole of his strength, physical, moral and intellectual, and you may as well suppose that he can develop one of these elements of strength, and neglect the others as try to separate the light from the heat of the sun, or the beauty and the fragrance from the rose. You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges, unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economical or political spheres. The inter-dependence is not an accident, but is the law of your nature. Like the members of our body, you cannot have strength in the hands and the feet if your internal organs are in disorder. What applies to the human body holds good of the collective humanity, we call the society or the state. It is a mistaken view which divorces considerations, political from social and economical, and no man can be said to realize his duty in one aspect who neglects his duties in the other directions."

This ought to be the creed of our workers in all spheres of public life. An abiding sense of duty, an ever present love of truth, a determination to fight error and prejudice, and follow the right because it is right, in the face of all opposition and discouragement, which is the common lot of all reformers, can only come from a deep sense of religion. It is not any particular creed or sect, but the broad principles of Hinduism as sketched above which ought to exercise a potent influence upon the lives of all who are working for the amelioration of their countrymen. Misunderstood, discouraged, scoffed at, many of them shall always be. But they must steadily go forward backed up by the example of their predecessors in the past. Those who aspire to achieve

great things must necessarily rise above pride in all its forms, pride of caste, of family, of connection, of position in life, and must follow the universal religion of satya and dharma. This is the ideal to be aimed at. The other side of the picture:—

But along with the good influence of Hinduism upon the lives and characters of our people, there are also certain defects of national character which are thought by many to be due to its teachings. The Hindu's disregard for things of this world, his morbid anxiety for future bliss, his unlimited capacity for suffering evil instead of manfully fighting against it, his belief in the law of *karma*, —have, it is said, crushed out of him every incentive to active self-help, and have made him the victim of foreign conquest, from the time of the Greek invasion downwards. Restrictions of foreign travel, a morbid touch-me-not-ism, punctiliousness in the matter of food and drink carried to the extent of people not taking things cooked, or drinking water touched by members of their own family, a tendency towards taking things too easily and not trying to mend them, to prefer idle speculation to verification by observation of facts, to believe in stories and legends created by an ignorant priesthood for misleading a still more ignorant laity, and a general spirit of helplessness in situations of even the smallest difficulty, are represented to be defects of character which have made the Hindus the butt of nations more worldly-minded than they. It is certainly true that the Hindus have never been remarkable for their aggressiveness. Live and let live has always been their motto. They never cared for foreign conquest, nor recognized those laws of competition and strife which play such an important part in the world of to-day. Nations and communities fighting for the smallest piece of earth, or for the smallest gain of commerce, the strong destroying the weak, and in their turn being destroyed by others stronger than they, have always been to the Hindus things hateful, resulting in misery and never conducing to happiness. The anguish and tears, the breakodowns, the unnatural deaths and the sorrow resulting from a life of strife and struggle, have never had any attraction for our people, and they have always preferred to leave these alone. Wave after wave of invaders from the north and the west have swept them off, till in the dark days of the Mahomedan regime, was left a nation

which but for the reviving influence it subsequently got from her western rulers, would have been left a nation in name. *Ahinsa parmoh dharma* (harmlessness is the highest religion), which was taught by the Rishis of India, was, however, not taught in order to make people victims of oppression. On the other hand, the history of India, even after the Mahábhárata, shows that though not enjoined to be skilled in the art of aggression, the Hindus were never deficient in the art of self-defence. Courage in war was never extinct among them. Only they did not realize till now the immense importance of corporate life. Faction, jealousy, discord, all due to ignorance, were what brought about their ruin, and even the efforts of individual rulers of strong will, like Sivaji, could not make them a nation capable of presenting a united front to a foreign foe. It was not luxury and vice, which, like they did with many other nations, killed the Hindus. Their traditions were fatal to a life of luxury. On the contrary, an ignorant priesthood playing upon the imaginations of an ignorant laity, and a disregard for those real teachings of religion which inculcated freedom instead of slavish adherence to form, proved their ruin. No doubt the sastras have throughout applauded a life of renunciation as the only life worth living. "Away with accumulation of wealth; all accumulation is fraught with evil. Contract your desires; do not expand them. Contraction of desire is the only road to happiness," is what they have taught us from time immemorial. But the sastras have also throughout recognized the value of exertion, and have never inculcated a life of sloth nor of indifference to evil. "Do not grieve at evils affecting large bodies of men. On the contrary, if you see means of alleviating them, do so energetically. Thou hast been created by thy Maker for engaging thyself in work. Success springs from work. Thou canst not avoid work." This is what our religion, rightly understood, tells us. The rishis believed in past karma, but they also believed in the influence of past karma being destroyed by good karma in the present. It was a disregard of this which induced that spirit of fatalism and inaction which has proved so detrimental to us as a nation. Restrictions in the matter of food also, though met with in some of the sastras, were never sanctioned to the absurd extent they are now inculcated. Foreign travel, as I have already shown, was never prohibited by earlier and recognized

authorities. Speculation on the mysteries of life was never allowed to usurp the place of earthly duty, nor was a life of renunciation held up as the only life worth living for all, but only for those who were prepared for it. Accordingly in the Mahábhárata when Yudhishthira, after having conquered his foes in battle, did not care to rule the earth, Vyasa, Krishna and others all told him to do his duty towards his subjects first, and retire from the world when there was time for it. Of course our sastras never inculcate that fierce competition and strife which form such a prominent characteristic of modern nations. But they are keenly alive to the duty one owes to his country and his fellow-men. Had theirs been a religion only for the monk or the anchorite, it would not have produced the heroes and statesmen it did from time to time, even under the most depressing foreign regimes. The present shortcomings of our people cannot therefore be laid at the door of our religion as taught in its purer sources, but to the misapplication of its principles by an ignorant and superstitious priesthood acting upon a slothful and ignorant laity. And the remedy lies not in relinquishing it for some other religion which may not, after all, be suited to our traditions, but in improving upon it where necessary. How this can be done, I shall now try to show.

IV.—The Ideal to Aim At.

We have seen that the efforts of various reformers from the time of the Rishis of the Upanishads to Sri Krishna downwards, were always directed towards the restoration of that religion of unity (*ekam eva advaityam*) (unity verily without dualty), which is the only true religion, of not only the Hindus, but also of the wisest and the best all the world over—the only road to happiness here and hereafter. They never believed in sects, creeds or forms. Distinctions of caste, superstition, dogma and isolation were all unknown to them. "Just as the waters of all rivers go to the sea, so does the worship of all the gods goes to the Supreme Being." "Those who worship other gods, worship Me (The Supreme Being), but in an improper manner." "A heart free from passion, a tongue unsullied by falsehood, a body free from causing harm to others, constitute the true worship of God." This was what they taught. Why should not the same be followed by those who wish India to rise. It is a hard fight, but the prize is also great. Superstition, the growth of centuries, sects and creeds,

error and ignorance, do not disappear in a day, nor for the mere asking. On the contrary, as in the past, they are sure to find their advocates, not only among the ignorant but among the learned also. Like slavery finding its advocates among slaves, slavery to superstition and form will never be wanting in advocates among even the learned of India. Not only have we now amongst those who ought to know better, advocates of child-marriages and caste exclusiveness and prohibition of foreign travel, but also of every superstition that goes to make up Hinduism of the present day. Even those who have received the benefits of a modern education, not unoften stand up to flatter the vanity of our people by telling them that everything we have or are, is perfect, and that every effort at reform or improvement is the result of a misguided imagination. Associations and societies where the claims of birth alone are held up as worthy of recognition, where all attempts at infusing a spirit of greater freedom of thought and action amongst the people are declared to be heterodox, are not uncommon. Teachings of history are disregarded and doctrines which have proved to be mischievous, advocated in all seriousness by persons whoss motto is self. Twenty-five years' experience in various spheres of public activity and study of religion and philosophy as taught in their best sources, have convinced me that in order to tread the road to individual and of national well-being, we cannot be too careful of these misguided patriots. The great and the good did no more come out of the homes of the ease-loving and the monied in the past than they are likely to do now. Sankara, Ramanuj, Nanak, Kabir, Dayanund and Keshab Chandra were all sons of poor people. Those of them who were Brahmins, had to give up the old notion of birth alone constituting Brahminhood, in order to realize the great principle of unity. Was not God to them the great principle of life, the Infinitive power working at the back of all, the Deity enshrined in all hearts—yours as well as mine? Did they not bring to his altar flowers of devotion washed in the flowing stream of a pure heart, the offering (*naivedya*) of all they called their own? Did they not lose themselves completely in the service of others and saw every one as their own self? If they did so, we who aspire to tread their footsteps, ought also to do the same. Theirs was the universal religion of *Love*, *Service* and *Unity*, and ours shall

have to be the same if we wish to prosper both nationally as well as individually. "There is nothing higher than doing good to others. The wealth of the good is for the good of others. He alone is born who has been the means of saving his caste and family. For the good the whole world is one family." These have always been the thoughts of the wisest and the best in India. "Sacrifice, gift, study, and asceticism are inseparably connected with the good, while self-restraint, truth, simplicity and abstention from injury are always followed by them. Do that during the day which may bring to thee happiness during the night. Do that during eight months of the year which may bring to thee happiness during the four months of the rains; do that during youth which may ensure a happy old age, and do that during life which may enable thee to live happily hereafter. That man is regarded as the first of his kind, who wishes for the prosperity of all, who never setteth his heart on the misery of another, who is truthful in speech, humble in behaviour and self-controlled. For the sake of a family one of its members may be sacrificed; for the sake of a village, a family; for the sake of a kingdom, a village, and for the sake of one's *atma*, the whole earth may be sacrificed. "The Eternal One is not an object of sight. Those only that are of pure heart behold Him. When one seeketh the good of all, succeedeth in controlling his mind and not suffereth it to be affected by grief, then he is said to have purified his heart. They have verily conquered the round of existence, who look upon all with an equal eye. Brahman is without fault and the same to all. Therefore they abide in Brahman. The gods sacrificed Yagya (Vishnu) by Yagya. These were the first *dharmas*. Look upon all this as pervaded by the Universal Spirit; all that you see in this world, save yourself by renunciation; whose is wealth here below? If you wish to live for a hundred years, act unselfishly." What better means can be pointed out by the followers of any religion to lead man to happiness everlasting? What better prayer can be uttered by man than of the Rishi who said, "lead me from the *asat* (unreal) to the *sat* (real), from darkness (*tamas*) to light (*jyotis*), from death (*mrityu*) to (*amrita*) immortality?" The goddess of prosperity (Sri) tells Indra the king of gods, that she resides always among those who are attached to virtue, who are truthful in speech, who always take pleasure in

showing compassion to the distressed, the aged, the helpless, the weak, the sick, and who enjoy their wealth by sharing it with others. And Krishna, in praising the rishi Narada as deserving the respectful worship of all, said that he was not only possessed of knowledge of self, was self-controlled and lived a pure life, but also that he loved all, was always bent upon the good of all, casting equal eye upon all, large-hearted, and always at the service of all.

In western countries they are now realizing the immense value of healthy-mindedness. In India this has always been the case. "The mind is the cause of both release and bondage." And because that is the only true religion, that it is now being followed by the wise and thoughtful all the world over. Cultivation of healthy-mindedness changes evil into a tonic and bracing good by simply changing one's attitude of fear to one of fight, despising its power and turning the attention the other way. With contempt of doubt, fear, worry, come courage, hope, and trust. The lower nature with its instincts and desires is thus made subordinate to the higher nature in order to realize the presence of the Infinite in all, at the back of all, as the life and power of all. In just the degree in which you realize your oneness with the Infinite Spirit, you exchange disease for ease, unharmony for harmony, suffering and pain for bounding health and strength. "And if God is equally the Father of all, then we have here the basis for the brotherhood of man. But there is in a sense, a conception higher than this, namely, the oneness of man and God, and hence the oneness of the whole human race. When we realise this fact, then we clearly see how in the degree that we come into the realization of our oneness with the Infinite Life, and so every step we make Godward, we aid in lifting all mankind up to this realization and enable them in turn to make a step Godward. In the degree that we open ourselves to the higher powers and let them manifest through us, then by the very inspiration we carry with us, do we become in a sense the saviours of our fellow-men, and in this way we all are or may become the saviours of one another." (Trine's In Tune with the Infinite, pages 197 and 202.) This is the modern gospel of truth which ought to be preached in India. It is not that gospel of narrow-mindedness, fear, and isolation which is making ourselves even more miserable than we deserve to be. True religion stands in no fear of any advance which science may

claim to have made in the realm of the phenomenal. Science may concern itself with the drifting of atoms, record her laws and construct her theories, irrespective of their bearing on human conduct; but it must, as it has now begun to do, acknowledge behind the ever-changing phenomena of nature, a substratum, permanent and intelligent, which is all Life, all Intelligence and without which matter cannot act. Science has failed to explain the phenomena of consciousness from atoms, and its exponents have had to take shelter under a something unknowable and unknown, and underlying all as the basis of consciousness. To it the seen is only real, but there is behind the seen an unseen which is real to not only ordinary humanity, but to the exponent of science also. So long as you believe in superstitions, dreams, hallucinations, plurality of gods, history and geography which have not been found to stand the test of scientific enquiry, so long science could give a shock to your beliefs But when you stand upon a substance or a principle which is at the back of all, and refer all to it, science retires and has nothing to say. The subjective is as much a reality as the objective. So long as you deal with the cosmic, the objective is real; but when you come to what makes the objective to be real, the reality of the subjective at once forces itself upon you.

Great has been the progress made by science in the nineteenth century. But even in countries where scientific inquiry is foremost, there is a dissatisfaction with the results of science in advancing the sum total of human happiness. Says Heckel:—"While we look back with a just pride on the immense progress of the nineteenth century, in a knowledge of nature and its practical application, we find, unfortunately, a very different and far from agreeable picture when we turn to another and not less important province of modern life. To our great regret we must endorse the words of Alfred Wallace: 'Compared with our astounding progress in physical science and its practical application, our system of government, of administrative justice, and of national education, and our entire social and moral organization remain in a state of barbarism.'

"To convince ourselves of the truth of this grave indictment we need only cast an unprejudiced glance at our public life, or look into the mirror that is daily offered to us by the press, the

organ of public sentiment. We begin our review with justice, the *fundamentum regnorum*. No one can maintain that its condition to-day is in harmony with our advanced knowledge of man and the world. Not a week passes in which we do not read of decisions over which every thoughtful man shakes his head in despair; many of the decisions of our higher and lower courts are simply unintelligible. . . . We shall touch but lightly on the unfortunate province of politics, for the unsatisfactory condition of the modern political world is only too familiar. . . . Our education of the young is no more in harmony with modern scientific progress than our legal and political world.'' (Riddle of the Universe, pp. 2—4.) And the solution of the problem, according to him, lies in recognizing the value of both experience and thought, by combining the activity of both paths of knowledge, sense-experience and rational thought, by returning to that monistic attitude which alone is correct and fruitful, and which holds matter and spirit to be the two fundamental attributes of the all-embracing divine essence of the world,—the universal substance. This monism secures man the due fulfilment of that command of universal religion, *viz.*, to do to every man as he would have him do to himself, not to do to another what he would not have him do to himself. It tells him that if he wishes to live in organized society, he has not only to look to his own good but to the good of every member of the society, to harmonize self-love with the love of others, to reconcile egoism with altruism. But whereas in systems of religions whose basic principle is duality, this cannot be fulfilled however much they may profess to do so, it can be and has been more or less completely fulfilled, by religions whose basic principle is non-duality, and which take a less realistic view of the world than they. In countries where material comfort is the chief object of life, the teachings of religion as to loving your neighbour as yourself is not and cannot be put into practice as we see it every day, and the idea that religion and practical life are antagonistic to each other, is thus unfortunately becoming common. Not so in countries where the ideals are not so worldly. Here in the east we value life, not for its worldly comforts, but for the highest good we can achieve in it.

The wealth of the East is not material, but spiritual; steam or electricity do not constitute it. "It lies," as Mr. Okakura says,

"in that vibration of peace that beats in every heart, that harmony that brings together emperor and peasant, that sublime intuition of oneness which commands all sympathy, all courtesy to be its fruits, making Takakura, Emperor of Japan, remove his sleeping robes on a winter night, because the frost and cold on the hearths of the poor, or Taiso of Tang forego food, because his people were feeling the pinch of famine. It lies in the realm of renunciation that pictures the Bodhi Satva as refraining from Nirvana till the last atom of dust in the universe shall have passed in before to bliss. It lies in that worship of freedom which casts round poverty the halo of greatness, imposes his stern simplicity of appearance on the Indian prince and sets up in China a throne whose Imperial occupant alone amongst the greatest secular rulers of the world, never wears a sword." (Ideals of the East, pp. 238, 239.)

Rama obeying his father's command and going in exile for fourteen years in order to make him keep his promise to his step-mother, Bharata re-offering the kingdom given to him by his father in order to observe the rule of seniority intact, and ruling it in his name during his absence, Rama refusing to return to Ayodhya in order to keep his vow of truth inviolate, his sending his queen away when his people suspected her character, Krishna refusing the throne of Mathura and preferring a life of freedom to one of kingly supremacy, his ready devotion to all that was of public good regardless of personal comfort, Yudhishthira refusing to go to heaven till his brothers and wife and the faithful dog which accompanied him were also taken there, Vikrama and Ahilya living like ordinary people even though ruling kingdoms, all show that our ideals have never been ease or personal gratification, but that gentle and staunch manhood, that ripe knowledge, that deep devotion, that firm adherence to truth, which the religion of unity can alone give.

Says a Sanscrit poet :—

सत्यमेव व्रतं यस्य दया दीनेषु सर्वदा ।
कामक्रोधौ वशे यस्य तेन लोकत्रयं जितम् ॥

He whose vow is truth, who is always compassionate to the poor, whose passion and anger are under control, he has conquered the three worlds.

सत्यं वाचि दृशि प्रसाद् परता सर्वाशयाश्वासिनी।
पाणौ दान विमुक्तिरात्म जनने क्लेशान्त चिन्ता मतौ ॥
संसक्ता हृदये दयैव दयिता काये परार्थोद्यमो ।
यस्यैकः पुरुषः सजीवति भवे भ्राम्यन्ति जीवाः परे ॥

He who is truthful in speech, who by kind looks brings peace to all, whose hands are free in making gifts, who always thinks of the means of overcoming the evils of birth, whose heart overflows with compassion, and whose body is devoted to the service of others, is alone a man; he alone lives. All other creatures wander about in the Sansára.

साजिह्वा या हरिं स्तौति तच्चित्तं यत्तदर्पणम् ।
तावेव केवलं श्लाघ्यौ यौ तत्पूजा करौ करौ ॥

That only is (worthy of the name of) a tongue which praises God; that only (of a) mind which is devoted to Him; those only (of the) praiseworthy (name of) hands which are devoted to His service.

"Listen to the essence of religion, and having listened to it, bear it in mind, He only sees who sees all beings like his own self."

श्रूयतां धर्म सर्वस्वं श्रुत्वा चैवावधार्यताम् ।
आत्मवत् सर्व भूतानि यः पश्यति सः पश्यति ॥

This is the ideal. Let India keep to that.

III.—PHILOSOPHY.

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति शान्त उपासीत

"Brahm is verily all this. It emanates from Brahm. It abides in Brahm. It resolves into Brahm. Let him therefore worship Brahm with a peaceful mind."

नेहनानास्तिकिञ्चन *(There is here no diversity.)* **एकमेवाद्वितीयंसत्**

(That which is—is one -without a second.)

I.—INDIAN PHILOSOPHY : ITS SOURCES, AIMS AND OBJECTS.

The goal of Indian aspirations.

To find unity in diversity, to know the nature of things, to solve the great question of man's life upon earth and his destiny hereafter, and to explain how the world he sees around him originated,—these and similar questions have occupied the thinking portion of mankind in all ages and countries, and ever and again arise to trouble most of us at some period or other of our lives. From henotheism to polytheism, monotheism and *adwaitism*, the progress of thought has always been from the concrete to the abstract, and the solution of these questions has always largely depended upon the view of life man takes. Climate and social surroundings, which influence his character, also greatly determine the success he is likely to attain in the solution of these questions In India, with its mild climate and bountiful natural resources, life has never been the struggle it is in western countries, nor has success or worldly comfort been regarded as possessing the importance attached to it there. Here the Hindu, with his few wants and peaceful character, has always regarded contemplation of the great mysteries of life as superior to making a figure in the world. To him earthly life is not the all-important reality it is to the people of the west. He looks upon it more as a sojourn in an inn, or as the meeting of passengers upon a boat, and as a thing attended with the three kinds of bodily, mental, and supernatural (*adhyátmika, adhibhautiká* and *adhidaivika*) pain, and he seeks to avoid it by

turning inwards, and finds that that is the only way in which it can be avoided. Optimism has never been his creed. On the contrary, as Bhishma says in the Mahábhárata, the more he sees of the world the more reason he finds to have a distaste for its objects. No wonder if his search for a solution of the above questions has met with better success than that of more worldly-minded people. It has certainly employed the largest portion of his time and the best intellects of his country. Here religion and philosophy have never been separate, but have always been closely allied, and the highest religion has been the highest and the truest philosophy. Religion does not here confine itself to morality, nor is philosophy a mere intellectual gymnastic. Both have the same object in view, *viz.*, to raise man from the finite to the infinite, to make him realize his true nature. Here religion and philosophy are not for the few, but subjects of vital importance for the many. Therefore from the Rishis of the Vedas and the Upanishads to the followers of both the six orthodox and the many unorthodox schools of Indian philosophy, poets and thinkers have constantly been discussing questions of life and death, of man's destiny upon earth and his end hereafter; each professing to have said the last word on the subject, but each ultimately finding the insufficiency of human intellect to finally solve the problem. The goal of all is, however, the same, not a life in heaven; for heaven itself represent no permanent bliss to these thinkers, but a complete release from the bonds of the *Sansára*, complete freedom from liability to transmigration the common lot of all. "As here on earth whatever has been acquired by action perishes, so perishes, in the next world, whatever is acquired by acts of religious merit." (Chhándogya Upanishad, VIII. 1-6.) Therefore "let the Brahmana, after he has examined the worlds gained by merit, renounce them by the reflection that there is nothing that is not created, because it is the effect of action. For the purpose of knowing that which is not created, he goes, sacred wood in hand, to a teacher who knows the Vedas and is solely devoted to Brahm." (Mundáka Upanishad, 1-2-12.) Nothing less than absolute release has thus satisfied the sages of the east, and according to them the wise find delight only in what is beyond all, and not in any intermediate condition. It is only in the attainment of the end that they consider all happiness to lie, all else is misery. Even the

practice of virtue is not sufficient, for virtue leads to a heaven whence one has to return after the fruits of his good works have been exhausted. Whilst therefore the practice of righteousness has been applauded for the man of the world, complete indifference to pleasure and pain, complete relinquishment of *dharma* and *adharma* (religious merit and demerit), and complete destruction of all sense of egoism, have always been declared to be the only means of final release.

"There is no hope of immortality in wealth" (अमृतत्वस्यतु नाशास्तिवित्तेन) "Immensity alone is bliss (योवैभूमातत्सुखं), there is no happiness in the finite" (नाल्पेसुखमस्ति). "The knower of self only crosses the ocean of Sorrow" (तरतिशोकमात्मवित्). These are the settled conclusions of the Hindus on religion and philosophy.

All schools of philosophy and all systems of religion in India promise no other goal to their followers. Each of them, however, represents a stage of development preparatory to the realization of that unity, that oneness of all which is the end of the Vedas—the Vedánta of India. The *Karma kánda* (the stage of work) of the Veda prepares man through disinterested performance of duty for the *Upásná kánda*, the devotion portion. There by steadying the mind and devoting it to the Supreme Being, he becomes qualified for the wisdom portion, the *Gyána kánda*, by which he learns to merge the finite into the infinite, the particular into the Universal, and whereby destroying all sense of duality, he secures for himself the final object of life, *viz.*, *moksha*, or release from the ever-recurring round of *Sansára*, and makes himself supremely happy, supremely blest. Each of the six schools of philosophy likewise, prepares the intellect for the realization of the truths taught in the same great fountain-head of knowledge, the Vedánta. The Nyáya and the Vaisheshika give the start by affording clear apprehension of the sixteen topics of the former or the seven categories of the latter, and telling the student that the soul is different from the body. When this belief in the body as our own is once gone, man's sufferings which always reach him through the body, cease. Having known that the soul is distinct from the body, the student goes to the Sánkhya and the Yoga systems for further introspection. There learns that in order to avoid the three-fold pain—the external, the internal, and the supernatural, the lot

The six Schools of Indian Philosophy.

of every one in the world, he has to discriminate between Prakriti (nature) and Purusha (Spirit or Self), either in the manner pointed out by Kapila, or through suppression of the mind inculcated by Patanjali. The Purva Mimansá of Jaimini next tells him the various kinds of Pramanas (means of knowledge), and he is now ready for realization of the fullest significance of the Maháváky as, the great sayings of the Upanishads: "Thou art verily That," "Brahm alone is all this," "I am He" The philosophy of India thus forms a consistent whole, and divested of quibblings of sectarian writers and studied in its proper spirit, instead of leading the intellect astray, it prepares it for a more complete and truer appreciation of the last word uttered on the subject of religion and philosophy by the Rishis of India in the Upanishads of the Vedas.

It is impossible in the present state of Indian chronology to fix the precise date at which each of the six schools of philosophy—the Nyáya, the Vaisheshika, the Sánkhya, the Yoga, the Purva and the Uttar Mimansás—came into existence. That they are of a very ancient origin admits of little doubt. Some of them, like the Sánkhya and the Yoya, are mentioned in works like the Mahábhárata, while they are all discussed and their doctrines refuted in the Vedánta Sútras.

(1) The Sankhya.

The general opinion, however, seems to be that the Sánkhya was the first in order of time. Its founder, Kapila, is spoken of in the Bhagwad Gita as an incarnation of the Supreme Being, and it is mentioned with approval both in the Mahábhárata and the Gita. The chief authorities on the system are the Sútras of Panchashikha, the Sánkhya Karikas of Ishwar Krishna with their commentaries by Gandapada and Vachaspati Misra. The Sánkhya Sutras, with their commentary by Vigyan Bhikshu is a later work. The Sánkhya is the first attempt to give a rational answer to the question of the origin of the world and man's destiny in it. It has largely influenced all subsequent thought in India, and in some respects in Germany also. Its aim is to relieve mankind from the three kinds of naturo-intrinsic, naturo-extrinsic and supernatural (*adhyátmika, adibhautiká,* and *adhidaivika*) pain. This can only be accomplished by a discrimination of the manifested, the unmanifested, and the knowing spirit, and not by the revealed (Vedic sacrifice) which is

attended with impurity and decay, and causes pain to living creatures. The creative force of the universe is *pradhána* (the chief), also called the *prakriti* (nature) and *avyakta* (the unmanifest). From it everything, except the *purusha* or the spirit, is evolved It is the one rootless root of the Universe (objective as well as subjective), endowed with the three *gunas* of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, characterized by goodness, activity and restraint, and evolving through these, every kind of existence, except the Purusha (spirit). It is in fact matter equipped with certain potentialities due to the *gunas*. From it are evolved, in order, the Mahat or Buddhi (the great), *ahankára* (egoism), the subtler elements of sound, smell, taste, colour and touch (*panchtan matras*); the gross elements—earth, water, fire, air and space, the five senses of perception, and the five organs of action, and the mind or *manas*. The *purusha* is free from the three attributes, possessed of discriminative faculties, non-objective, singular, intelligent and non-productive, a mere witness and spectator, but being linked with Prakriti till his final release, he believes himself to be an agent and an enjoyer of the fruit of action. In reality it is the *prakriti* which binds herself by herself, though the *purusha* appears to be bound. When, however, the latter realizes that he is different from the *prakriti* and its various modifications, that he is one thing and *prakriti* anoth r, when he comes to know "that I am not this, naught is mine, nor do I exist," then his emancipation is complete. *Prakriti* then ceases to act, and thenceforward there is no motive for its evolution. The fundamental doctrine of this school is its denial of the idea of a supreme deity (Iswara) and its positing a plurality of souls. It argues the production of every existence from *prakriti*—(1) because specific objects are finite and must have a cause, and different things have common properties and must be different species of the same genus; (2) because things are in a state of progression and show active energy of evolution which must have been derived from a primary source; (3) because, from the fact of the world being an effect, it must have a cause; (4) and because, from the fact that there is undividedness and unity in the whole universe, it must have a common origin (Sánkhya Káriká 15). Buddhi is the chief agent of the Purusha, and brings about both worldly experience as well as final release from the emanations of the *prakriti*. God is not necessary, as *prakriti*, though non-intelligent must act for the release of the Purusha, like milk which, though non-

intelligent, must flow for the feeding of the calf. Creation cannot be due to a merciful Creator; for before creation there is no misery to ward off through the exercise of mercy, and creation through mercy and mercy because of creation, is a logical see-saw.

The system thus stops short at tracing the origin of things to nature and finds no universal soul or *átman* behind. It does not therefore satisfy man's aspiration for an intelligent first cause. Matter, according to it, evolves itself for the use of another, the Purusha, but not under the command of a designer. Its explanation, why matter should evolve for the release of the spirit, is, however, not satisfactory. All systems of philosophy, and all great men of the past who have tried for release, had one intelligent principle, free from pleasure, pain, and delusion as their goal. And the Sànkhya which does not recognize it alone, but it and matter, is therefore not a perfect system.

(2) The Yoga.

The next school of philosophy is the Yoga. Like the Sánkhya, it is spoken of with much approval in the Upanishads, the Gita and the Mahábhárata, and many of its directions have always been practised by all philosophers and aspirants after release. Its chief exponent is Patanjali, the great grammarian, who wrote the Mahabhas'ya. His system is expounded in 195 Sutras, divided into four chapters, called the Samadhi, the Sadhana, the Vibhuti and the Kaivalaya Padas. Its chief commentator is Vyasa. Now-a-days Yoga is taken to mean only restraint of the breath, and the Hatha Yoga Pradipka of the Swatamarama is a very popular work on Hatha Yoga. The Yoga is the Sánkhya system, with the addition of an *Iswárá* or God, who is a particular soul untouched by Klesha (distraction), Karma (action), Vepáka its fruit), and Vásná or A'sayá (its resulting impression). He is eternally Omniscient, the Instructor of all, Unlimited by time. He is indicated by the syllable Om, by meditation upon which are removed the impediments to the attainment of Yoga and the inner self is realized. It is the mind (chitta), with its various modifications, which stands in the way of such realization. If the modifications of the mind are suppressed by *sámádhi* or unconscious meditation, the Purusha abides in his own nature and is thenceforth all bliss. This suppression of the modifications of the thinking principle is necessary for destroying the fivefold *ávidyá*,

which is the cause of the Sansára, and its joys and sorrows. This *ávidyá* consist in mistaking the eternal for the non-eternal, the pure for the impure, the pleasurable for the painful, and the non-ego for the ego. Its offshoots are *ásmitá*, the sense of "I" or "mine," Rága (attachment), Dwesha (aversion) and Abhinevesha, love of life. These distractions, if they are fine, ought to be suppressed by gaining mastery over the thinking principle, and if gross, by meditation and study, asceticism and resignation to the will of God. With distractions in their full force, Karma is sure to follow with its result in the shape of the rank and class in which one is born, the length of his life and the nature of his experiences in it. The result of good Karma will, of course, be birth in a family of a high rank and long life with pleasurable experiences. But to the enlightened even pleasure is pain on account of its enjoyment creating a desire for more, anxiety for retaining objects of pleasure and the impression which every enjoyment leaves upon the mind to be revived in its proper time, and thus leading to misery in the end. The Yogi ought therefore to ward off all misery before it comes, for when it has come, it cannot be warded off except by suffering. The cause of misery is the falsely uniting of the seer, the spirit, with the *buddhi*, the senses, their objects and all that we see around us. The spirit is *drashtá* (seer), and all that he cognizes is the *drishya* (seen). Though pure, the spirit appears to cognize through the *buddhi*. This cognition is beginningless, but not endless. It is the cause of the Purusha's experience in the Sansára, but it is also the cause of his release from it. Both *bhoga* and *mokshá* (experience and emancipation) are dependent upon this union of the Purusha and the Chitta. The break of this junction through discrimination is the Kaivalya, the final absolution of the seer (*drishta*). When it is accomplished, the Purusha thinks that he has known all that was to be known, has freed himself from all bonds, has attained to all that he aimed at, has nothing further to attain, and has done the whole of his duty. His mind is now at perfect rest, all *gunas* have dropped off like stones falling from a mountain top, and he is what he is.

The system thus shows man the way to attain to his highest end, and though it has been abused by some of its followers hankering after occult powers (*siddhis*) in the shape of control over matter, space and time, all of which are strongly deprecated by its

first inculcator, Pátanjali, yet if properly followed, it is the best and the loftiest mental, moral and spiritual training for humanity, even though, like the Sankhya, it takes the union of the Purusha and the Chitta, for granted. It is largely practised in India, and our best thinkers have always been Yogis in the true sense of the term.

(3) The Nyaya.

The Nyáya is the next in importance. Its object is to prove that God who is distinct from the individual soul, is the cause of the world, and it seeks to establish the meaning of the Vedas by removing and explaining away all doubts. Its first exponent was Gautama, and its chief commentators were Vátsyáyana, Kátyána and Váchaspati. It is divided into five chapters, each containing two sections.

The first section of the first chapter deals with nine out of the sixteen topics (*padárthas*) of the system. These are: pramána (means of knowledge), prameya (object of knowledge), sansaya doubt), prayojana (purpose), drishtánta (instance), sidhánta established truth), avayava (premises), tarka (reasoning), and nirnaya (conclusion). The second part deals with the remaining seven *padarthas*, viz., váda (argumentation), jalapa (sophistry), vitandá (cavilling), hetwábhása (fallacy), khala (quibble), játi (false analogy), and nigrahsthána (unfitness for arguing). In the first section of the second book the nature of doubt is examined, the four kinds of proof, *viz.*, pratyaksha (sensuous perception), anumána inference), upmána (comparison), and sabda (word-authority) are discussed, and all doubts as to their being means of knowledge removed. In the second portion of this chapter, it is shown that presumption (arthá-patti) is really included in the above four pramánas. The first section of the third book examines the nature of the soul, the body, the senses and their objects; and the second, the nature of the mind and the intellect. The first portion of the fourth book deals with activity (pravriti), faults (dosha), transmigration (prety abhava), phal (reward), dukha (pain), and apvarga) release. The second portion discusses the causes of the faults as well of the whole and parts (avavadi). The first section of the fifth book deals with the various kinds of játi (futility), and the second with those of nigrahsthána (objectionable proceedings).

The Nyáya is very largely studied all over India, especially in Bengal, where Navadip or Nadea is famous for its logicians or Naiyayikas. It establishes the existence of God by refuting the doctrines of the materialists. Through investigation of means of knowledge it seeks to remove all misery caused by birth, activity, faults and false notion. It holds that all dharma and adharma (merit and demerit), which are due to activity (pravriti), lead in their turn to misery, pain and sorrow, and thus cause birth and re-birth. It is through favour of God that man realizes the nature of his soul by means of knowledge and thus drives off all misery and secures final emancipation.

(4) **Vaishesheka.**

The Vaishesheka school of Kanada is an offshoot of the Nyáya, and "its cardinal principle is that all material substances are aggregates of atoms which are eternal in themselves, but not eternal as aggregates. These atoms are organized organs and organic. These are set in motion by a personal creator. It holds that the destruction of misery which is inherent in the soul, is only possible after proper reflection proceeding from knowledge. The latter depends upon the six categories or objects, *viz.*, substance, quality, action, community, particularity, generality and inherence. These are to be considered according to their similarities and dissimilarities. According to it souls proceed from birth to birth, reaping in pleasure and pain the fruit of merit and demerit, ever produced as seed from plant and plant from seed. Bound in sensuous experience, the soul waits its release, till the understanding is purified by knowledge, and it attains final release and is merged into the absolute. The human soul is a substance, the substratum of the attribute of intelligence. The great soul Ishwara is also a substance, the substratum of attributes, such as omnipotence, omniscience, and the like. Knowledge is produced from the union of the mind and the soul, the former being in constant communication with objects through the senses. The instruments of knowledge are sensation, inference, analogy and testimony. The ethics reared on these foundations consist of entire devotion to God, and the *summum bonum* is achieved when the series of miseries inherent in the soul is annihilated once for all." (Introduction to Mándukya Upanishad by Mani Lal Dwivedi, page IV.)

The Purva Mimánsa of Jaimini consists of a body of aphorisms divided into 12 chapters. It deals with varieties of duties, the order of their performance, the qualifications for such performance, indirect precept, inferable changes, efficiency and co-ordinate effect. It is a school of ceremonial and interpretation, and places the *summun bonum* in literally carrying out all Vedic injunctions. According to Sankara it is athestic, and God is not deducible from it.

(5) Purva Mimansa.

The last school of thought is the *Uttara Mimánsa*, which has largely influenced all subsequent religious and philosophic movements in India, and which is universally believed to be a means of complete emancipation from the Sansára, this ever-recurring round of transmigratory existence. All the other systems are relatively true. The Vedanta is absolutely true. It is therefore called the Vedanta Sidhánta.

(6) The Uttara Mimansa.

All schools of thought are, however, agreed upon certain truths upon which Indian thought is built. These are—(1) re-incarnation whereby souls enter various bodies according to their knowledge and work; (2) the immortality of the soul and death being death of only the body not of the soul, its separation from the body; (3) transitoriness of worldy life and worldly enjoyments; (4) the authoritativeness of the Vedas, and (5) the world being composed of the three attributes of *satwa* (goodness), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (darkness). The points where philosophers differ, are (1) the oneness or the diversity of the Purushas (selves): (2) whether God created the world or creation is due to the action of *pakriti* (matter) or atoms; (3) whether God is the instrumental or the material cause of the universe or both; (4) whether the world is beginningless or with a beginning; (5) whether it exists in fact, or its existence is merely due to the action of nescience (avidyá); (6) whether the soul is one or many, and (7) whether it is different from, or is the same with, Ishwara. Endless discussions have been held and thousands of volumes have been written from time immemorial upon each of these subjects, each thinker claiming to have found a solution to these problems. The rishis of old, however, looked upon them more as matters for con

Points of agreement between the various schools of philosophy in India.

stánt introspection than of argument. The nearest approach to their solution is the Vedanta.

The Vedanta in the Vedas.

The religion of the *rishis* of the Sanhita portion of the Vedas, as we have shown above, was not henotheism or polytheism, but worship of God as typified in nature (virata upásna). But even this did not satisfy them, and they asserted the existence of "One Self which was beyond all, which existed before all, and whose origin even the gods did not know." Their question was: "There was not non-existence (*asat*) nor existence (*sat*), there was no realm of air, nor sky beyond it, what covered in and where, and what gave shelter? Was water there—unfathomed depth of water? Death was not there, nor was there aught immortal; no sign was there—the day and the night's divider. That one thing breathless breathed by its own nature, apart from it there was nothing whatsoever. Darkness was there at first, concealed in darkness--all this was indiscriminate chaos. All that existed then was void and formless. By the great power of thought that unit was born. Who verily knows and who can declare whence it was born and whence came this creation? The gods themselves came later into being, who knows then whence it first came into being? He from whom this creation came, whether he formed it or did not form it, the most high seer in the highest heaven, he verily knows it or perhaps even he does not know it." (Rig Veda X. 129.) The Sanhita or Brahmana portion of the Veda did not answer it fully. It was reserved for the Upanishads to do so, and we have therefore to go to the latter for the root of that great tree of Adwaitism which has afforded shelter to so many an Indian sage, from the most ancient to the present times.

Even in ancient India persons were, however, not wanting who denied the authority of these Upanishads; for we find a Sutra of Jaimini, the author of the Purva Mimánsá, to the effect that "as the purport of the Veda is action, those passages whose purport is not action, are purportless" (Jaimini Sutras 1. 2-1.) The meaning is that the Upanishads which purport to give information about an existing entity like Brahman, are either purportless or are subordinate to those texts of the Veda which deal with sacrificial action. The reply of Vyása and his commentator Sankara in the Brahma Sutras, is that the Veda has a meaning in so far only

as it conduces to the highest end of man, *viz.*, freedom from the Sansara and unity with Brahman, and that such passages of it as give information about existing entities like Brahman, and point out the means for its attainment, instead of being purportless, serve the highest end of man. This is true, for while the sacrificial portion of the Veda has too many now-a-days only an antiquarian or historical interest, the philosophical portion has a much deeper and more vital one. It points out to every seeker of truth the road travelled by persons who were most earnest seekers after it, and who have left for him their experiences of the road. Hidden under allegory and fanciful description and play upon words, or even crude or primitive ideas of physics, &c., and in spite of all faults of metre and grammar, and peculiarity of language, the Upanishads record the views of men who were deeply in earnest in finding out a solution to some of the most cardinal problems of existence, and who have solved them in a manner which has left little for future generations to add or alter.

The goal of the *rishis*, whatever be the interval of time and space at which they were uttering or discussing the truths embodied in the Upanishads, was one and one only, *viz.*, to attain unity both in nature and in man, to merge the phenomenal in the infinite, to rise above the seen and the ephemeral into the unseen and the permanent. All dharma (duty), karma (action), and upásná (meditation) to them subserved no other object. Their máhávákyás or great sayings embody the result of their contemplation of nature and man. तत्त्वमसि (Thou art that). अहंब्रह्मास्मि (I am Brahman). अयमात्माब्रह्म (This *atmá* [self] is Brahman). प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म (Brahman is thought), सत्यंज्ञानमनन्तंब्रह्म (Brahman is truth, intelligence, and bliss). These are some of the great truths of these treasures of thought of ancient India. *Apará vidyá* (worldly knowledge) is declared in them not to be conducive to the highest end of man and the realization of the absolute or Para Brahman, which is without any attributes whatever, transcending speech and mind, described as "*neti*" "*neti*," "not this," "not this," only to be so. Various thinkers have tried to interpret the teachings of the Upanishads according to their own system of thought and belief. Sankara, for instance, deduces from them absolute nonduality, Ramánuja nonduality with a qualification, and Madhava duality. The rishis of the Upanishads, however, laid down both

duality and nonduality, the former for the relative and the latter for the absolute.

The Bhagvad-Gita.

The two are, however, not so systematically brought out in the Upanishads as in the Mahábhárata and its great episode, the Bhagvad-Gita, a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna, at the field of Kurukshetra. It forms Chapter 25 to Chapter 42 of the Bhishma Parva of that great epic, and fits in so naturally with the narrative, that it cannot be said to be a later interpolation, and must, like the main story of the great war, be assigned to the 14th or the 15th Century B.C. Krishna could not have possibly spoken it in the form it is now available to its readers any more than the other dialogues in the Mahábhárata were held in verse, but that it embodies his teachings in full, and was compiled by the person who compiled the story of the great war, is undoubted. It is described to be the "milk of all the Upanishads" and "the essence of all the S'astras." In the compass of eighteen Chapters, comprising 700 verses, it sets forth the path of action (the Karma yoga), the path of devotion (the Bhakti yoga), and the path of knowledge (the Jnán yoga), all leading towards one goal, in a manner which is as pre-eminently useful to the man of the world engaged in the busiest affairs of life, as to the recluse in the forest.

The book opens with the grief of Arjuna at having to fight his kinsmen in battle for earthly sovereignty which was after all perishable. He appeals to Krishna for advice, and the latter tells him that "if the *atma* (self) is, as it is, undying, unborn and eternal, then one must do his duty irrespective of its consequences. If, on the other hand, the *atma* is subject to birth and death, like the body, what will inevitably come to pass cannot be warded off, and duty must be done. And lastly, it is in devoting all action to the Lord, the Self of all, and realizing that one's sphere is action, not regard for the fruit of action, that true happiness flies. The man of firm intellect is not he who is shaken by every little gust of passion and desire, but he who retains his equanimity under all conditions, keeps his senses, mind and intellect from going astray, and ever finds satisfaction in his own self. *Gyana* (wisdom) is the realization of our own self as the self of all, and the means for such realization are performance of duty without regard for its fruit, control of the senses, intro-

spection and equanimity under all conditions. Devotion of all to the Lord is *karma yoga* or the path of action, and the man of wisdom is not he who relinquishes his work in life, but he who does it vigilantly for the sake of preserving the bonds of society. The difference between the fool and the sage is that while the sage acts without attachment, the fool acts with attachment. The man of wisdom realizes the self (atma) as being above all sense of actor, action and the object as Brahma himself. It is only he who has relinquished all action unto the Lord, whose doubts have all been destroyed by knowledge and who is devoted to his own self that knows this. One does not become a Sanyasin merely by relinquishing his work in life, but by relinquishing desire. It is yoga (work performed in a disinterested spirit), which purifies the intellect and makes it fit to receive the light of knowledge. Realizing the self as beyond action and knowing the senses and the mind to be concerned with action, the yogi devotes himself to Him, thinks of nothing but Him, places his faith in Him, and washes off all impurity by looking upon all as his own self. Brahma is near to those who have destroyed all sense of duality, whose impurities have been washed off, who have their minds under full control, who are devoted to the good of all, who are free from passion and desire, and who have known their own selves. One alone is one's own enemy or one's own friend. If he conquers his own self by himself, then he is his own friend, otherwise he is his own enemy. Steady practice leads in course of time to the realization of one's Self as the self of all, as pervading all, as the one guiding principle of the universe. Knowing this he looks upon the pleasures and pains of all as his own." Having thus told Arjuna how to purify his lower self of all *ahankara* (sense of I and mine) in the body and do what he has to do for the sake of the Lord, Krishna goes on to show the nature of the Supreme, both with as well as divested of attributes. "The That of '*Thou art That*' of the great saying of the Upanishad, is the self of all. It is that in which all this is interwoven, the one undivided essence pervading all, itself one, but appearing as many, concealed by its three attributes of *satwa*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and only known to those who devote themselves to Him. For those who have reached the higher stages of knowledge He is an object of knowledge, for those in the lower

stages an object of meditation. One becomes what he constantly meditates upon. Therefore at all times let him meditate upon Him, remember Him and fix his mind and intellect upon Him whose name is Om. For such a one there is no return to the sansara. The *atma* which is all this, is yet like the ether unaffected by the virtues and vices of that which it pervades, and though appearing to be all, in reality it only is, nothing else is. It is not limited by one body or one world, but is everywhere and yet beyond all. But He is known only to those who are devoted to Him, sing of Him alone, bow unto Him alone, see Him alone as all this, or Him alone and not all this. This path is open to every one. Even if the greatest sinner acts thus, he attains to the Supreme and even those of the lowest birth can thus achieve emancipation. The various manifestations of the divine are for purposes of contemplation. All that is glorious, resplendent or powerful partakes of the divine energy, of the Supreme self which pervades all, and is yet above it. The whole of the universe is but the manifested body of the Supreme self," and under the allegory of Krishna showing to Arjuna his Virata or universal form, the cosmos is made to appear as the vesture of the divine. "But it is only he who is free from enmity, who is the friend of all, who is charitable towards all, who is free from all sense of 'I' or 'mine,' who is the same in pleasure and pain, who is of a forgiving disposition, is always contented, has his senses under control, and is ever devoted to the Lord, is dear unto Him that knows this. Difficult is the path of the Nirguna Brahman (Brahman without attributes). But they who devote themselves to Brahman with attributes under any of his manifested forms, ultimately reach the Nirguna. The *That* having been separated from the phenomenal, which He is said to have created or evolved, the unity of the two, the *Thou* and the *That* follows. There are two principles, the Kshetra (Body) and the Kshetragya (Knower of the body). The Kshetra is the field of manifestation of Kshetragya. It consists of desires, emotion, the senses, the five elements in their various combinations, and the body. The means of discrimination are absence of pride, vanity, harmlessness, straightforwardness, rectitude of conduct, serving the preceptor, purity, steadiness of purpose, distaste for objects of sense, realization of the evils of birth, decrepitude and death, renunciation

for objects of the world, like wealth, family, &c., equanimity, under changing conditions of life, uninterrupted devotion to the Lord, avoidance of society of men, constant study of the sastras and introspection. This leads to the realization of that which is neither *sat* nor *asat* (the manifest or the unmanifest), which illumines all, pervades all, supports all, is omnipresent, undifferentiated though appearing to be differentiated, the light of all lights, knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower, the purusha in the body who though appearing to partake of the attributes of the *prakriti* (nature), is yet beyond them, who though appearing to act does not act, and who like the sun is not affected by the defects of what it illumines. This discrimination of the *prakriti* and the *purusha*, the one acting and the other not acting, the one unintelligent, the other intelligent, the one subject to modification and change, the other not, leads to the supreme. The three attributes of the *prakriti* bind the purusha who on account of attachment to the *gunas* wanders through various forms of existence according as one or other of the attributes predominates, and who by knowing the Supreme self to be beyond all attributes, rises above that which brings him to the sansara. This sansara (world) is a tree with its root as Brahm, its various manifestations as its branches and the vedas for its leaves This tree is of a very ancient growth, and is incapable of being cut except with the axe of renunciation. Having cut that tree to the very roots, do you seek that by attaining to which there is no birth, no death. The sun shines there not, the moon does not illumine it. He is the supreme self of all, the primeval *purusha* above the perishable and the imperishable (matter in its manifested and unmanifested conditions). The various evil desires and passions must be got rid of. True and pure faith, a pure diet, pure meditation and pure speech, are necessary for the realization of the goal. So long as there is the slightest tinge of egotism, injunctions and prohibitions have their full force. But for one who has no sense of "I" or "mine," there is no sin even if he kills all the world. One who through knowledge sees only one essence in all, who does everything from a sense of duty, whose action is prompted with no other motive, whose intellect discerns rightly between what is to be done and to be avoided, whose determination to stick to the highest to the exclusion of everything else never wavers,

whose sole desire is for that happiness which follows the realization of self, whose performance of duty is the worship of the Lord, even he attains to that highest devotion whereby he knows the nature of the self, and knowing it, is absorbed in it.

This is a synopsis of the Gitá. It does not, as has been supposed, inculcate a dissolution of all earthly ties, nor sanctions a disregard for all relations of society or family life. It vindicates the cause of Dharma and presents old truths in a new light and brings them to a focus, on an occasion which was as unique as it was terrible. To restore Dharma and bring peace instead of internecine war, was the mission of Krishna, and bitter though the struggle was to Arjuna to fight his own kinsmen in battle, yet duty must be done, the usurper of a righteous inheritance punished, and this was what Krishna exhorted Arjuna to do. Instead of inculcating fatalism, the Gitá sets the ideal of duty in the only light in which it has always been regarded by the best of thinkers all over the world, and this is the reason why not only in India but in other countries also, it has been regarded with the veneration due to the best books written by man.

The Mahábhárata is full of such teachings. For instance, there a fowler tells a Brahman "that he only is a real Sanyasin whose actions are not performed with the object of securing any reward or blessing, and who has sacrificed all his requirements to renunciation. Attachment to nothing whatever, peace of mind, disinterested performance of duty, equanimity of temper, are the ways to secure spiritual enlightenment and the knowledge of self is the highest of all knowledge." (Vana Parva, Chapter 213.) "He to whom the agreeable and the disagreeable, weal and woe, past and future, are the same, is said to possess every kind of wealth." (*Ibid*, Chapter 312.) "Dwelling in the heart and of the measure of the thumb, that illustrious One, the embodiment of Fullness, is not an object of sight. Unborn, he moveth day and night. He that knoweth Him becomes both learned and full of joy. I am called the father and the mother. I am again the son. Of all that is, of all that was, and of all that will be, I am the Atma, the self. O Bhárta, I am the grandsire. Ye are staying in my soul, yet ye are not mine, nor am I yours. The self is my abode, the self is my place of birth. I am the warp and the woof of the universe. That upon which I rest is

He the indestructible. Unborn, I move awake day and night. It is by knowing Me that one becomes full of bliss. Subtler than the subtle, with the mind for its eye, it is I whom am awake among all creatures. He is the Universal father, even He who dwells in the lotus of the heart of every creature." (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 46, verses 27 to 31.)

This shows that the religion of the Bhagvad Gitá was not peculiar to it, but was the religion of the period and the Gitá could not therefore owe its origin to a foreign source as has been supposed. It has been translated into not only every vernacular language of India, but into many European languages also. In Sanskrit its commentaries are very numerous, and the followers of every school of thought Adwaita, Vashisht Adwaita and Dwaita have commented upon it. But it does not require any commentary except a pure heart to which its meaning is promptly unfolded.

The Brahman Sutras.

The teachings of the Upanishads, the Gitá or the Mahábhárata, though both the latter mark a distinct advance upon the former in point of systematic discussion, do not, however, represent a complete system of philosophy, and it was reserved for Vyása to present this in his Brahma or Vedánta Sutras The latter seek to reduce the teaching of the Upanishads to a consistent and systematic whole, explain away apparent contradictions, and refute all objections that have been urged against the system. This is done in 556 aphorisms, ascribed to the same Vyása who compiled the Vedas and wrote the Mahábhárata. This can scarcely be the case, for the Sutras themselves speak of Bádráyana (Vyása) and his pupil, Jaimini, besides other earlier teachers. There is, however, no doubt that they belong to a very early period of Hindu literature, and the internal evidence they furnish, also points to a very ancient origin. It may, however, very well be doubted whether they belong to the Rationalistic period, which is said by some thinkers to range from 1000 to 242 B.C. Professor Max Müller assigns the formation of the six systems of Indian Philosophy to the period from Buddha, 5th century, to Asoka, 3rd century, B. C, though he admits, particularly in the cases of the Vedánta, the Sánkhya and the Yoga, a long previous development, reaching back through the Upanishads and the Bráhmanas to the very hymns

of the Rig Veda. (Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, page 119.) The first portion of this opinion is apparently not correct, for the mention of the words " Brahma Sutra padai " in Gitá (XIII-4) is thought by many to indicate that the Sutras were extant when the Gitá was written in its present shape, which was certainly long before Buddha and Asoka. These Sutras are also called the Uttara Mimánsá and the Sáriraka, and are divided into four chapters, each in its turn comprising four sections, and each section a number of sub-sections. Their four chapters are called the *Samanvaya* (connecting), *Avirodha* (reconciling), *Sádhana* (means) and *Phala* fruit). The first four Sutras, *viz.*, " Then, therefore, an enquiry into Brahman," " Bráhmana is that from which the origin, subsistence and dissolution of the world proceed," "The omniscience of Brahman follows from its being the cause of the Scripture," " But that Brahman is to be known because it is connected with the Vedánta texts as their purport," embody the fundamental doctrines of the Vedánta. The rest are more or less in the nature of the establishment of the system after refuting the objections of its opponents. A large portion of the first Chapter is, for instance, occupied in establishing that certain passages of the Upanishads which contain either clear or obscure indications of Brahman, refer only to the highest self. The whole of the 2nd Chapter is occupied in refuting the Sánkhya, the Vaisheshika, the Nyáya, the Vijnánvádin, the Arhata and other theories of creation. The greatest effort is, however, directed against the Sánkhya system, which appears closely to correspond to the Vedánta. The nature of the *Thou* is next discussed, and it is proved that the *thou* (the individual self) is eternal and immortal, and its birth and death are only in so far as it comes into and goes out of a body, that it is an actor or an enjoyer of the result of action in so far as it is associated with the intellect (Buddhi), and that in reality it is not a part nor an emanation of the highest self, but the highest self (Brahm) itself. Its passage out of and into the body is pointed out in the 3rd Chapter which also discusses its conditions in the states of waking, dream and deep sleep. Here the nature of the highest Brahman *That* is also discussed, and it is proved to be without attributes, though it appears to be limited or manifold on account of its connection with *upadhis* or limiting adjuncts. It is then pointed out that the individual soul can attain to absolute Brahman only by knowledge,

and to a lower or qualified (Saguna) Brahman by the worship or meditation enjoined in the Upanishads. It is also shown that the knowledge of Brahman is independent of all ceremonial action, but that the practice of the latter prepares the way. In the last Chapter the means for the attainment of emancipation are pointed out, the various stages through which the worshippers of the lower Brahman pass discussed, and the happy condition of the *vidvan* (the knower of Brahman) described. This is according to Sankara's interpretation of the Sutras. Ramanuj and Madhava give different interpretations from the standpoint of nonduality with a difference, or duality.

Much of the discussion contained in the Sutras or their commentaries is of little interest to any other but a philosophic reader. Indeed, a large portion of it, is of a most scholastic character. The Sutras, taken by themselves, are now and then unintelligible, being sometimes single words or sentences or bits of sentences, with either the subject or the predicate left out They represent aids to memory communicated by teacher to pupil, and must always have been accompanied with verbal explanation. Otherwise they could have been of no use to a student of the Vedánta. But while in ancient India, where verbal instruction was the rule, written commentaries on the Sutras could be dispensed with, they could not be so in later times, and a number of commentators have therefore commented upon them, each to establish the views held by him or the school he represents. The oldest of these commentators was Baudháyana, who is known as the *Vartikakára*, and who is mentioned as such by Sankara. The *karikas* of Gandapadácharya, who was most probably the same person who commented upon the Sánkhya Karika, and of Dravidachárya, who was his contemporary, are the earliest *adwaita* commentaries on the Upanishads and the *Sutras* now extant. The former has been published, but the latter, though referred to by Sankara, has not yet been published. Sankara refers to it at the end of the fourth Sutra of the lst Chapter, first pada. The verses he quotes are intended to support the view that when there has arisen in a man's mind a knowledge that "I am Brahman," the apparent world, with all its distinctions, ceases to have any meaning for him. I tried to get Dravidachárya's Vartika from the library of the late Sri Sankaráchárya of Dwarka, where it was said to exist in manuscript but was told that a complete manuscript was not

available. Therefore the earliest complete commentary on the Sutras is Sankara's, whose work in this direction was as grand as it was lasting. He is the best exponent of the present system of the Adwaita philosophy in India, and we shall therefore briefly allude to his work.

Sankara.

He was born in the village of Kaladi, in Malabar, of Brahman parents. Subsequent traditions, the result of hero-worship, mention of various extraordinary phenomena, as having attended his birth, of his being an incarnation of the god Siva who had come upon earth to restore the religion of the Vedas, and of Brahma, Vishnu, Vayu, Saraswati, etc., having also incarnated in the shape of his opponents for the better establishment of truth. Passing these, it is certain that he made great progress in learning at a very early age. His father died before his investiture with the thread, a ceremony which was performed by his mother. At the age of seven, having learnt from his village teacher all that he could teach, Sankara returned to his mother, lived with her for two years and then became a Sanyásin at the age of nine. He then went to Govindachárya, who lived at Amarkanta on the Nerbudda, and after studying under him, went to Badrikasrama in the Himalayas, and there, before he was fifteen years of age, compiled his sixteen commentaries. These are (12) on the 12 Upanishads named in a previous chapter, (13) on the Bhagvad Gitá, (14) on the Brahma Sutras, (15) on the Sahsranama adhyaya of the Mahábhárata, containing the thousand names of Vishnu, and (16) on the Sanata-Sujáta Gitá, a dialogue between King Dhritrastra of the Mahábhárata and the sage Sanata-Sujáta. Joshi Matha (really Jotir Matha), where Sankara lived and wrote his commentaries, is about 24 miles this side of Badrikasrama, and no place can be more favourable for contemplation of the great mysteries of Brahma Vidya. It has now lost much of its loneliness on account of the advent of pilgrims every season, but even now its jungles are the favourite resort of the contemplative and the recluse.

From Badrikasrama Sankara returned to the plains, held long discussions with the followers of the various schools of philosophy and religion then prevailing in India, and defeated men like Kumarila Bhatta, Mandana Misra, Prabhakara and others, all between the age of 16 and 26. Of these Kumarila Bhatta and Prahbakara

were the commentators of the Purva Mimansa, the former anxious to re-establish it as an orthodox, and the latter as an atheistic system, and Mandana Misra, the great champion of ceremonial Hinduism. He then restored Hindu temples which had been destroyed by the Buddhists, established four *Mathas*, or seats of learning—the Jyotih in Badrikasrama, the Govardhana in Orissa, the Sringeri in Southern India, and the Sarda in Dwarka. At these he installed his disciples Padama, Totaka, Hastámalaka and Sureswara. He then retired to the north and died at the age of 32. This is Sankara's life, shorn of all the miraculous and the traditional elements with which the Sankara Digvijaya, a record of his achievements, abounds His exact date is a subject of much controversy. European scholars say he lived between 788 and 820 A. D. Hindu writers make him a contemporary of Vikramaditya, the founder of the Samvat era, which makes his date to be about 500 A.D. Other traditions make Sankara to have lived between 650 and 740 A.D. On the contrary, a paper given to me by the late Sri Sankaracharya of Dwarka, states that Sankara was born on the 5th Yudhishthira Saka 2631. His investiture with the thread took place on the 6th Chaitra Sukla Saka 2636. He became a Sanyasin on the 11th Kartick Sukla S. 2639, went to Govindacharya on the 2nd Jaith S. 2640, composed his commentaries up to the 15th Jaist Krishna S. 2646, held discussions with the advocates of various schools of religion and philosophy, and celebrated his *digvijaya* between the 15th Margshirsha 2647 and 3rd Chaitra Sukla 2660, and died on the 15th Kartick Sukla 2663. The original of this document is said to be in the office of the Gaekwar of Baroda, and was written on the 5th Magh Sudi Saka 1848. The Saka era commenced in '78 A.D., and the Yudhishthira Saka flourished in India for 3,050 years, after which the Samvat era (B.C. '57) came into vogue. This makes Sankara to have been born about 476 B. C., or some 80 years after Buddha, a conclusion with which modern scholars may perhaps not agree in the absence of further evidence. At Joshi Matha I failed to obtain any trace of the period at which he lived. The tradition that the image of Badri Nath was brought by him out of the Narada-kunda, a post in the Ganges close by, is however universally believed.

Of Sankara's four mathas, the gyotir and the Govardhana are well nigh extinct. The Sringeri and the Sarda exist, the former

being even now a powerful institution. It is, however, his influence upon Indian thought which shall always last. He was essentially a man of the age, one of those great teachers who appear in the world at rare intervals of time, to leave their mark upon its history and religion. Buddhism had been brought low from the lofty ideals of its founder. India was at the time groaning under the ritualism of the orthodox Bráhmanas. All life seems to have been crushed out of it, and the country required a teacher who could prove the relative value of ceremonial dogma and ritual, and show that the attainment of the ideal of the Upanishads was the only road both to individual happiness as well as national well-being. His mission was to establish the philosophy taught in the best and the purest sources of Hindu thought, against impractical idealism on the one hand, and dogmatism on the other. That he did so in the face of great difficulty, and was also successful in doing so, is clear to every reader of his works. In gracefulness of language, logically close reasoning and subtlety of argument, Sankara stands foremost of all Indian commentators, and while 75 out of every 100 Hindu thinkers follow him, 15 only adhere to Ramanuja, 5 to Vallabha, and 5 to Madhava, the advocates of qualified *adwaitism* or *dwaitism*. Not only by followers of his own school, but by opponents also, Sankara is largely studied, and all subsequent expounders of the adwaita philosophy have closely followed him in their exposition. If his philosophy does not exercise the universal influence it ought to, it is because the intellect of the country has largely deteriorated by having passed through so many revolutions. His message was one of truth, and it is entitled to be received with the reverence due to truth. It is a mistake to suppose that the monoism of Sankara was no better than Buddhism, or that it perverted the teaching of the Vedas and taught abandonment of good works and indifference towards this world and the next, for every one irrespective of the stage of development he had reached. On the contrary, in the normal condition of life, worship and prayer, as well as efficacy of good works, were recognized by Sankara as fully as by the teachers of the Upanishads. Had he taught abandonment of action, he would not have written the works nor engaged in the discussions nor inculcated the devotion he did.

The Upanishads, the Bhagvad Gitá and Brahma Sutras are known as the *Prasthana trayi*, the three main stays of the Vedánta, and Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhava have all commented upon them, each from his own standpoint Sankara, is however, the most popular of all. Sankará's most correct expounder was Anand Giri, whose gloss is also published with his commentaries. Whole hosts of Adwaiti commentators have commented upon the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahmá Sutras, but they all want the depth and originality of Sankara. Sankara's commentaries upon the Brahmá Sutras have been commented upon by Vachaspati Misra in a gloss called the Bhamati, which in its turn has been commented upon by Amalánanda Sarswati in the Kalpataru, and the latter by Appadikshitta in the Parimala. But all these works are of a very scholastic character and soon tire out the patience of other than a professional reader. On the Upanishads the glosses of *Vidyaranya* and Sankarananda are the best after those of Sankara, while peculiar facilities are now afforded to a student of the Vedánta philosophy by the excellent English translations of all these three works published in the Sacred Books of the East. In India they have been translated in almost every Indian Vernacular and are largely read by the pious and the thoughtful in all parts of the country.

The Yoga Vashishtha.

After the Upanishads, the Gita, and the Brahmá Sutras, come the Yoga Vashishtha and the Panchdasi. The former is a voluminous work of 32,000 verses ascribed to Valmiki, the author of the Ramáyána, and records the instruction given by Vashishtha to Rama, who at a very early age had withdrawn himself from society. The book is divided into six books, called the *Vairagya* (non-attachment), Mumukshu (aspirant after release), Uttapati (creation), Sthiti (preservation), Upasama (peace), and Nirvána (emancipation or extinction) Prakarnas. Its author, who was a subjective idealist, differs from the *Vigyanvadíns* of India in that he recognizes a real and an ever-present entity behind mind (Manas or Chitta) which, according to him, is the phenomenal world. He is in many respects a bold and an original thinker and his work is grand, not only in point of volume, but in that scholarship also. His language is the language of the heart. He is a firm believer in what he is writing, and is always at great pains to

carry the reader along with him. He is often very poetical and though he was not Valmiki, the author of the Ramáyána, yet he was one of the later *Rishis* of India, perhaps later than even Sankara; for the great commentator never mentions him or his work in his commentaries. He speaks of the doctrines of Buddha in more than one place, and there is also an allusion to the doctrine of *Mlechhas* who believe in a permanent heaven and hell. That he flourished before 1300 A.D. is clear from the fact, that Vidyaranya Swami, the author of the Panchdasi, who lived in the fourteenth century, frequently mentions and quotes from the Yoga Vashishtha in both the Panchdasi and the Jivan Mukti Viveka.

The work, however, exercises much influence upon Hindu thought, and is largely read both by Sanyasins and laymen, especially in Northern India. Its cardinal principle is, that it is the mind (Chitta) which is the cause of the objective world, just as the seed is of the plant. Time, space and causality are forms of, and not apart from, the mind. The mind is identical with *vasna*, or mental impression, and is caused by the sense of egoism and consciousness thereof. The substratum of this sense of egoism is, however, the Paramátmá, or the highest self, and the field of its manifestation is Máyá, which resides in it. It is our belief in the reality of the world that is the cause of trouble. Such a belief is destroyed by reflection on the nature of the Self. Such reflection will show that Brahman, the Supreme Self, is neither a cause nor an effect. The world is thus no effect of Brahman, and yet because it appears to be so, it is nothing but illusion due to the action of the mind. When once this truth is realized, and the mind is so controlled that it ceases to be mind, the world with all its joys and sorrows ceases to give trouble. With the sublation of the phenomenal, disappears all consciousness of the objects existing in it, as well as all sense of "I and mine" therein, and with the disappearance of all sense of the "I and mine," what remains is the absolute imperishable Brahman, which transcends both speech and thought. So long as the word "World" has a meaning and a reality to our minds, it is a world in existence. When, however, the word "World" ceases to have any meaning, then the world and Brahman become synonymous. Then there is no world, all is silence, Brahman the ever-permanent *chit*. Nothing can be affirmed or denied regarding the existence of the world, except that, whatever it is, it is no other than

the manifestation of the Supreme mind. This realization is accomplished, not by external renunciation, but by introspection resulting in a complete subjugation of the mind and realizing either that I am all this, or that neither is there any such thing as "I" or "all this." Without removal of this sense of "I am this" or "this is mine," there is no peace, no happiness, no knowledge, no renunciation, no bliss. With the removal of this notion by knowledge, all sense of duality is destroyed, and that which remains is the Pure Self, and peace and happiness are the result. The world is co-existent with the sense of I. Each presupposes the other, each depends upon the other like attributes and object. The "I" gives rise to "mine," which in its turn creates desire. This leads to belief in the realityof *this*, which is the cause of all misery. This sense of "I" arises on account of the mutual action of the mind and Prana. The mind is in the Prana and the world is in the mind. With the control of the mind the Prana is controlled, and the world ceases to exist. Likewise, with the control of the Prana, the mind is controlled, and the same result follows. And just as the eye is the cause of the perception of objects and when the eye is diverted, the object ceases to be visible to it, even so is the world co-eval with the consciousness thereof. When the consciousness of the visible is diverted from it towards the supreme self, the world ceases to exist. The world is in truth *not*. None need, therefore, be afraid of it, but having relinquished all consciousness of the "I," the same in affluence and poverty, happiness and misery, in that which is and that which is not, with all desire set at rest, let him abide in his own self.

The book abounds in touching stories of how kings and sages realized this ideal, their struggles and final triumphs. In one place the musings of the Siddhas set Janaka of Mithila athinking. In another place king Bhagirath is told by his preceptor to renounce all, even himself, before he can obtain knowledge. On a third occasion Shikhidhwaj is instructed by his queen in the guise of a Brahmachari, how, when he prides himself upon having renounced all, he is told that he has renounced nothing till he relinquishes his sense of "I." These and many other stories are all directed towards the establishment of the above truths. In one place we have a weird account of the dance of Siva and Sakti, to point out that the dance of the Sakti is nothing more than the Siva (Brahm)

functioning as the universe, and that like the objects of a dream appearing to be real in, and for the purposes of the dream, the world has a reality in the condition in which it is seen and not in any other condition. In the ordinary condition of life it is real like the dance of the Sakti. In reality it is not like the objects of a dream to one who is awake. The vision of Lila illustrates the same truth and her experiences of several incarnations, first as a Brahman's wife, and then as the queen of two successive kings, all the while when she was under an illusion, are mentioned as showing the true character of the visible. The question why the world or this sense of "I" arose, is answered by saying that in truth the world is not, Brahma alone is. The wise never look upon it as existing in fact. It is true to those who believe it to be true. But just as the vitality which creates the various flowers, leaves and fruit resides in the seed, and manifests itself when the time comes for its manifestation, even so does this world abide in Brahman and becomes manifest on account of the *vasna* (impression) of jivas, kalpa after kalpa. In truth there is no such thing as creation or dissolution. All is Brahma uncreate, ever at peace, the happy, the blissful. The book is full of repetitions, but the above represents the line of thought adopted by its author. It has been translated into several vernacular languages, and I have just published a correct Hindi translation with the text in two volumes.

Among minor works may be mentioned the Ashtavakra Gita, of which I have also published an English translation. It sets forth the ideal of the Adwaita in the most direct and the simplest manner possible. Its author was not Ashtavakra of the Mahábhárata, but a later writer. Its Janaka was also probably not the Janaka of the Upanishads, but a common name in Indian philosophic literature for a king who ruled his kingdom even though he had realized the goal of the Adwaita. The book is very popular in India, and its great popularity among all classes of Hindu thinkers is due to its freedom from technicality, its avoidance of discussion, and the directness of its teaching. This is summed up in a few words, "Distaste for objects of sense is release, love for objects of sense is bondage. Thou art not the body nor is the body thine ; neither actor nor enjoyer art thou, Thou art Intelligence itself, the ever witness, the ever free, do thou roam happy. Have faith, my son, have faith ;

do not delude thyself here. Thou art Intelligence, thou art the Lord, thou the Self, thou the Prakriti."

The Panchdasi. The last complete work on the philosophy of the Adwaita is the Panchdasi, whose author was the celebrated Vidyáranya Swami, minister to a king of the Karnatick, called by him *Buk* Bhupal. He lived in the thirteenth century, and is considered by some Indian Pandits to be identical with Sáyánachárya, the commentator of the Rig Veda. By others he is supposed to be identical with Mádhávacharya, Sáyána's brother. Others again make Sáyána, Mádháva and Vidyáranya to be one person, with three names corresponding to his three stages of life as a Minister, a Vanaprastha and a Sanyásin. For depth of thought and clearness of expression Vidyáranya stands unequalled, and is in some respects even superior to Sankara. The Panchdasi is the best work of its kind on the Vedánta. In the compass of 15 chapters, called the 5 Vivekas (discriminations), the five Dipas (lamps) and the five Anandas (joys), it sets forth the principles of this philosophy in a very clear manner. Vidyáranya's other works also partake of the same lucidity of style, and the Pandits are right in calling him the *Sarvajna Mádháva*—the omniscient Mádháva.

Works like the Chitsukhi of Chitsukhácharya, or the Adwaita Sidhi of Madhasudan Sarswati are for very advanced and scholastic thinkers and serve no practical purpose. On the other hand, works like the Atmabodha, the Vedánta Sára and the Vevakachuramani are for beginners, and do not set forth the doctrine in any but the concisest manner. The vernaculars have also a philosophic literature of their own. In addition to Sanskrit poets and thinkers, the indigenous bards and singers of India have also left us some of the most beautiful and touching songs on the vanity of the world, and devotion and realization of unity as the goal of life. It is therefore not difficult to see why in spite of all idol-worship and superstition, these ideals of philosophy are here cherished not only by the thinking but also by the many in everyday life. What the leading principles of Hindu philosophy are (1) on the origin of things, (2) the nature of the Soul, (3) God, (4) freedom of the will, and (5) realization of man's destiny upon earth, we shall now briefly indicate.

II.—THE WORLD,—THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL,—GOD.

What is the world we see?

The fundamental principle of the Upanishads (Vedanta) is *eka meva adwitiyam, one verily without a second,* or *unity verily without duality.* How then did the world come into existence, and what is the cause of all individuation is the question? The Upanishads assert that all multiplicity, all evolution of name and form, and all specific cognition lie in the nature of Brahma Himself. In reality Brahman alone *is*, nothing else *is*, all that appears to be is He. "There is here no duality, he goes from death to death, who sees here even the semblance of duality" (Kathopinishad, II. 4-11,) is the emphatic declaration of the Upanishads. How the world arose, they do not profess to explain. They take it to be a fact of experience and try to remove it by true knowledge or *Samyagdurshana.* It is beginningless, but not endless (*anadi s'anta*). You cannot define it either as *sat* (being), for it is sublated by knowledge, nor as *asat* (non-being), for it appears to exist, *i.e.*, is patent to all. It is the *Sakti*, or power or nature of the Lord which creates the world. To the Rishis the question was not how the world was created, but how they came to be the individualized beings they were, and finding that they came to be so by mistaking the unreal for the real, their care was to remove the error. The Vedánta is thus more a system of removal of our belief in the reality of duality than one of the establishment of unity. It is a system of what is technically called the *adhyáropa apváda,* whereby the *nishprapancha,* or that which is beyond the phenomenal, becomes associated with or evolves as phenomenal (*prapanchyate*), and where by removal of the false idea whereby the *nishprapancha* came to be taken as *prapancha,* the true or the real is left as it was. All limiting adjuncts, whether in the cosmos or in the individual, are illusory. In reality like space limited by objects is not different from universal space, though it appears to be so, there is no difference between the individual and the Supreme Self, though they appear to be different on account of their respective limiting adjuncts, the one as the Omniscient and Omnipotent ruler of the universe, and the other as a creature with little knowledge, bound up with worldly ties and subject to worldly relations and worldly joys and sorrows. Remove the limitations

which are illusory and the relation of the individual and the Supreme Self no longer exists, all is then Brahman. "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, cognizes nothing else, that is the infinite (Bhumá)." (Chandogya Upanishad, VII. 24.) "What proof have you," asks Vashishtha, "of the existénce of the body and its senses? Matter is mere illusion, and as it is with other bodies, so it is with our bodies also." "This is that," "this is mine," "may I be this," "may I have this," in this way the unreal is taken for the real and the real for the unreal. But as the uses that are made of the earth, its roads and houses in a dream prove to be false and vanish into emptiness upon waking, so do words like '*my*, *thy*, *his*,' employed in our ordinary waking condition, lose all meaning when all sense of personality is sublated by true knowledge. All our struggles and efforts in life are nothing but the bustle and commotion of fighting men in a dream, and vanishing into nothing in their waking state. If you ask whence comes this phenomenon of dreaming, and whence proceed all its different shapes and varieties, in reply nothing further can be said, except that is the reproduction of past impressions (vásná). If you ask why does a dream appear to us (as real), the answer is "there is no other cause for it but our own past impressions. So it is with the world." (Yoga Vashishtha Nirvana Prakarna, II, Chapter 62, verses 27 to 32.) Says Vishnu to Brahma in the Bhagwat: "Do thou receive from me knowledge with supreme wisdom, together with its secret and its adjuncts as declared by me. What I am, how I am, what is my nature and what my attributes, let that knowledge be thine through my grace. Verily I alone was, before all this gross or subtle come into manifestation, what is beyond both am 'I' alone am after this. All that is, am I. That which remains am I. That which appears without reality as well as that which (though subsisting) does not appear in the self, is to be known as the *maya*, illusion of the self, like an image or darkness. (An image though it is seen is not real; on the other hand, the planet Rahu, though it exists in conjunction with other planets, is not seen. In the same way the body, the organs of sense, the mind, &c., though seen, are not real, do not in fact exist. On the other hand, the Supreme Self, though ever present, is not seen. This is *maya*.) Just as the great elements appear to enter into (the forma-

tion of all beings, high and low, even though they are already there, even so am I in them, though in reality not in them. The seeker after truth need only seek for so much knowledge and nothing more, *viz.*, that that which appears as the effect is the cause (but without leaving its causal nature), and that which remains after the cessation of the effect is also the cause. That alone is the *atma*. Taking your stand upon this faith through supreme meditation, you will not be subject to delusion in kalpa after kalpa." (Bhagwat, Book 2, chapter IX, 30 to 36). This sums up the whole position in a very clear manner.

Again it is said, "two birds always united, of the same name dwell upon one and the same tree. One of them enjoys the sweet fruit of the fig-tree, the other looks round as a witness. Dwelling in the same tree with the Supreme Soul, the deluded soul, immersed in the relations of the world, grieves on account of want of power, but when it sees the other, the long-worshipped ruler, as different from all worldly relations, and his glory, its grief ceases." (Mundaka Up. III-I, 1 and 2.) In the Chandogya Upanishad the parable of the man who is deluded away from his native home in the Gandharas, and left blindfolded in a lonely jungle by a band of robbers, till some one points out to him the way to his native home which he reaches and is thenceforth happy (VI-14), also points to the fact that man's ordinary life upon earth is due to his having left his true nature. "Desire born of error is the cause of transmigratory existence." "When the Jiwa, or the individual soul, considers himself different from what he truly is, that is, when he regards himself as fat or lean, fair or dark, a Brahman or a Sudra, then he fails to know the Supreme Soul, himself and Prakriti with which he is united. (Máhábharata Santi Parva, Chapter 309, verse 9.) "This tree of illusion," says Vashishtha, "spreads forth its branches of error, grows and dies, dies and grows, cut it down and it springs up ever and anon, so there is no end of it. Though we think it to be past and gone, it is ever present before us, though hollow and unsubstantial, it appears to be thick and substantial. Ever fading, ever acquiring new verdure, the more it is lopped off, the more luxuriant it grows. It is a poisonous tree, whose touch benumbs the senses in a moment, but cut it down to the roots by knowledge, and it does not grow thenceforward. All distinction of the lower and the

upper regions, of stars and planets, of light and darkness, of solids and fluids, of the Vedas and the Sastras, trouble only the ignorant and the deluded, but not the wise who see but one spirit everywhere in the great, the mean, the highest and the lowest. It is ignorance (Avidyá) which dwells upon external forms, but knowledge looks to what is beneath the form and takes the latter to be but a vesture of the spirit.'' (Yoga Vashishtha, Nirvana Parakarana, Chapter VIII, abstracted.)

In the Vishnu Purana also we read : '' Because the Lord is one of the nature of Intelligence, therefore His form is undifferentiated. He is in reality no material object. Know, therefore, all distinction of mountains, ocean, earth, &c., born out of him to have been superimposed upon Him who is intelligence itself. But when after all the effect of works has been destroyed, there remains Intelligence alone in its own form, pure and free from evil, and then cease to exist those fruits of the tree of illusion which form the distinction of things. Is there anywhere a thing which is without beginning, middle, and which is uniform and which, moreover, undergoes change of state, and which frequently is not what it was? If such a thing there be, how can it be a reality ? The various changes of matter from the earth to the pot, from the pot to its breaking up into two halves, then its breaking into small pieces, then into atoms, are all seen by men on account of their karma which prevents their having correct notions. Tell me what is here the unchangeable reality ? Therefore with the exception of Intelligence, there is nothing anywhere, at any time, O thou the twice-born. It is the one Intelligence alone which is apprehended in many ways by men whose minds are diversely constituted on account of their karma. The Intelligence which is pure, devoid of evil, devoid of sorrow, free from all differentiation of speech, &c., all attachment, is One always, the Highest, the Supreme Lord of all—Vasudeo. There is nothing else here.'' (Vishnu Purana III—?, 39-44.)

This view of the world that it is nothing but Brahma manifested, is the generally accepted view. The followers of dualistic philosophy believe in an actual creation by a personal creator, who is all power, all wisdom. Thus Ramanuja, who is nondualist with a difference, asks the nondualist how when illusion conceals the nature of Brahman, which is intelligence itself, can it do so without destroying it which is the position

of the nondualist? He argues that the nondualistic theory is incorrect because when the selfhood of the self is projected by illusion itself, it cannot reside in that which it has itself projected. Brahman who is of the nature of Intelligence itself cannot be the abode of avidyá. It cannot, moreover, conceal the nature of Brahman without destroying it. If it is a thing at all, it must be either a reality or unreality. It is not admitted to be a reality, and it cannot be an unreality, for as long as a real misguiding error different from Brahman itself is not admitted, so long it is not possible to explain the theory of illusion. It is, moreover, not possible for the illusion producing avidyá to be incapable of definition either as an entity or as a nonentity. All cognitions relate either to entities or nonentities, and if it be held that the object of cognition is neither an entity nor nonentity, then all things may become the subject of all cognitions There is also no means of proof by which an avidya can be arrived at and established. The predication that this avidyá is removed by knowledge just as fear is removed when it is known to be due to a false cause, is not true; for the positive emotion does not here disappear by a subsequent stultifying knowledge, but on account of its own transitoriness. (Introduction to Sribhashya by Professor Rangacharya, pages 22 to 24.) The position taken up by Ramanuja is, that Brahman is not attributeless and devoid of qualities, but is possessed of attributes and qualities. All things, intelligent and non-intelligent, form his body and have no existence separate from him. They are consequently subject to his control. The world has Brahman for its material cause, and yet it is different from Him. He possesses the attributes of luminosity, and the manifoldness which is negatived in the Vedánta is only such manifoldness as is due to the non-realization of that oneness of the universe which results from the fact of Brahman forming the soul thereof. The highest person is one embodied being and matter and soul constitute his embodiment. Thus there are three real entities all Brahman Himself—God, soul and matter. Matter and soul the body of God, but the unity of the three is not the unity of identity but of solidarity, of one Supreme will wroking through. In the case of individual souls, ignorance cannot be removed by any abstract knowledge, but by the grace of the Lord. Divine grace can alone give freedom to the soul, and to know God is to seek salvation. The distinction of

knower, object of knowledge, and knowledge is not unreal, and no knower can destroy himself by means of knowledge. The followers of the *dwaita* say that the world we see around is a real creation due to the *sakti*—the power of the Lord. So far the philosophers.

All are, however, agreed upon the fact that the contraries we see in human nature, our strugg'e between reason and passion and the higher and the lower natures, our constant dissatisfaction with the present, our tendency ever upwards, our search after an ideal where all knowledge and all goodness find their limit, and our ever trying to break away the bonds of appetite and desire, all seem to point out to some inherent defect in human nature to be the cause of all this misery. Man is at once both fettered and free, blind and seeing. He knows that sensual pleasure is a fleeting thing, and yet he runs after it and gives it a fictitious reality borrowed from his own true self. In the Mahábhárata we find one of the characters exclaiming, "I know *dharma* (duty) and yet am disinclined to perform it. I know what I ought not to do and yet do not avoid it. By some god residing in my heart I do as I am impelled to." But the god is here no other than man's own error, for it is that which possesses itself of his whole nature, gives a false universality to the fleeting and the transient, and ever urges him on towards its attainment, always to be dissatisfied, always to wish for more, and always to be disappointed. "It is not in the limited or the conditioned that happiness truly lies," so we read in the Upanishads, but "in the unlimited absolute (Bhumá)," which abides not in externals but in its own glory. Man knows this and yet makes himself unhappy and miserable by pinning his faith to the externals. In the Mahábhárata human life is compared to a wilderness covered with a dense jungle and teeming with roaring beasts of prey. Man runs hither and thither hoping to find shelter, but finds it nowhere. He is pursued by beasts of prey and meets a woman of a terrific appearance stretching forth her arms, and rushes into them to find himself even more miserable. He sees a deep pit full of thorns and falls into it, and is entangled and hangs head downwards. Near the mouth of the pit is a huge elephant of a terrific appearance, with six faces and twelve feet, ready to tear him to pieces, and within it a huge snake opening wide its mouth to

swallow him. Within the creepers is a comb of honey with a number of bees buzzing round it. Drops of honey now and then fall into our miserable wayfarer's mouth and so sweet he finds it to be, that though surrounded by so many calamities, he ever desires for more, never wishing to leave the pit, even though he sees two large rats continually gnawing at the roots of the tree he is hanging by. The wilderness is the world. The inaccessible forest within it, is the allotted sphere of one's life. Its beasts of prey are the diseases which prey upon man, and the woman of terrible appearance is old age to which he is subject. The huge pit is the body, the snake within it is time, the universal destroyer, while the cluster of creepers in which he is entangled is his desire of life. The elephant at the pit is the year, and its six faces are the six seasons and its twelve feet, the twelve months. The rats and snakes that are eating at the roots of the tree are days and nights, and the trees in the creepers are his desires, and the drops of honey the gratification of those desires to which he is strongly addicted. Such is man's course of life. Beset with diverse kinds of errors, entangled within the nest of their own mind, the foolish and the wicked wander repeatedly upon earth, while the wise, aided by their own intelligence, cross the forest and attain to Brahma. (Mahábhárata Stri Parva, Chapters V, VI and VII, abstracted.)

That this is man's normal condition here below, few will deny. If this is not error or illusion (Avidyá)—what is it? From its very nature an error or illusion ceases to exist the moment it is known to be such. It is knowledge (vidyá) alone knowledge which gives immediate relief from worldly troubles and worldly sorrows. Freedom from desire, extinction of all sense of egoism, freedom from evil, and possession of wisdom are the only places of refuge for those who are being scorched in the fire of the world. The wise in every age and every country have repeatedly said the same, and yet the world has always been going on its usual way. What other indication of Avidyá can there be? If the name *Avidyá* troubles you, you may give it any other name; but that this is man's lot in life no one will venture to deny; if not now, at least when he comes to reflect upon the things of the world.

Is God the cause of the world?

The next question is, is God the cause of the world? Brahman is declared by the Upanishads to be both without attributes, without parts, and as "not this," "not this," as well as the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the world. But how can an entity like this be a cause, or how can anything be its effect? To reconcile these apparently contradictory positions, has been the great aim of all Indian Vedántins. We have seen that the followers of the Sánkhya who admit the authority of the Vedas, hold that the universe is brought about by the modifications of the *Prakriti*, without the guiding hand of God. They did not acknowledge a Lord or an Ishwara, but an Absolute Being who is a bystander and a witness. Prakriti (Nature) alone is the cause of the world. But, as pointed out by Váchaspati Misra, the author of the *Sánkhya Tutwa Kaumdi*, "whether this evolution be for the sake of nature herself, or for the sake of another, it is the rational principle (*chitana*) which acts. Nature cannot act without reason, and therefore reason must direct nature Embodied souls (Kshetragya), though rational, cannot direct nature as they are ignorant of its character, therefore there is an omniscient being, the director of nature, who is God or Ishwara." (Sánkhya Karika, 56.) This is a position which could have safely been held, but for the declaration of absolute unity by the Upanishads. The question, therefore, exercised the earlier Vedántins as much as it has done later day thinkers. Says Sankara: "The non-existence of external things cannot be maintained on account of our consciousness of them. Our consciousness of objects in the waking condition is, moreover, not like our consciousness of objects in dreams, for while the former are objects of immediate consciousness, the latter are objects of remembrance. If you do not admit the existence of external objects, the existence of mental impressions will not be possible. The external world, therefore, exists." (Chapter II—II—Sutras 28 to 32.) He, however, declares Brahman to be not only like the potter of the jar, the operative cause of the world (Nimitta kárana), but like the clay being the material cause of the jar, also its material cause. (Upádána kárana.) Brahman is the material cause, inasmuch as the Upanishads declare Him to be so, when they say that "He made Himself made itself"; meaning thereby the self which was in existence previously to the

creation of the world, modified Himself into something special. He is the operative cause, as there is no other operative cause outside Him, and the Upanishads declare that previous to creation there was Brahman, one only without a second. Brahman is, moreover, an intelligent cause, and the fact of His effect being of a non-intelligent nature is not in His way. But all this, according to the author of the Brahma Sutras, is to be accepted upon the authority of the Scripture (Upanishads) and reason should not be applied to a subject which is outside its sphere. The existence of distinction or duality is explained by him as in (for) ordinary experience, while in reality there is non-difference of cause and effect. Then the effect is non-different from the cause, being a mere name arising from speech. In reality it is *sat* alone which exists. To explain the distinction away, Sankara says: "We see that waves, foam, bubbles and other modifications of the sea, though they are not different from sea-water, exist sometimes in a state of mutual separation, sometimes in a state of conjunction, etc. From the fact of their being non-different from the sea water, it does not follow that they pass over into each other; and again, although they do not pass over into each other, they are not different from the sea. So it is in the case under discussion also. The enjoyers and objects of enjoyment do not pass over into each other, and yet they are not different from the highest Brahman. And although the enjoyer is not in reality an effect of Brahman, since the unmodified creator himself, so far as he has entered into the effect, is called the enjoyer, still after Brahman has entered into its effect, it passes into a state of distinction in consequence of the effect being a limiting adjunct." (Thibaut's Brahma Sutras, Vol. I, page 319.) In reality, however, according to Sankara, when final authority, having intimated the unity of Brahman, has sublated the entire course of the world, there is no need for assuming a Brahman comprising in itself various elements. All manifoldness is due to Avidyá. "Belonging, as if it were, to the self of the Omniscient Lord, there are names and forms, the figments of nescience, not to be defined either as being (Brahman) nor as different from it, the germ of the entire expanse of the phenomenal world, called in Sruti and Smriti the illusion (Máyá), power (Sakti) or nature (Prakriti) of the Omniscient Lord. Different from them is the Omniscient Lord himself. . . Thus the Lord depends upon the

limiting adjuncts of name and form, the products of nescience, just as universal ether depends as limited ether (such as the ether of a jar) upon the limiting adjuncts in the shape of jars, pots, &c. Hence the Lord's being a Lord, his omniscience, his omnipotence, &c., all depend on the limitation due to the adjuncts whose self (cause) is nescience, while in reality none of these qualities belong to the self whose true nature is by right knowledge cleared of all adjuncts whatever." (Brahma Sutras, Thibaut's Translation, Vol. I, page 329.)

This is Sankara's *vivartaváda*, according to which Brahman appears as the manifold world without undergoing any change in its real nature, just as a rope appears to be, and is mistaken for a snake without changing its real nature. This theory has its followers among all Indian Vedántins of Sankara's school. It has, however, been subjected to some severe criticism by Vigyán Bhikshu, the author of the Sankhya Pravachan Bháshya, in his commentary on the Yoga Sutras. Says he: "Máyá is declared in the Puranas to be Prakriti, which cannot be defined either as *being* or as *non-being* in the *parmárthika* (true) state. The Vedánta does not hold the world to be totally non-existent or totally destructible, for the Sutras declare that the non-existence of external things cannot be maintained on account of our consciousness of them. The Sutras also declare that on account of that which is posterior, *i.e.*, the effect, being that which is, *viz.*, the cause, and on account of the difference of nature, the ideas of the waking state are not like those of dreams. The world is, according to the Sruti, both *sat* and *asat* (being and non-being), because it assumes various forms in the past and future. The illustration of dream, &c., in the Scriptures only declares its evanescent nature and unreality in the true condition, not its total non-existence. Objects of a dream even are not totally non-existent, as they are objects cognized by the seer in that condition. The view of the Neo-Vedántins, that the world is an illusion, like a dream, is therefore wrong." (Commentary on Yoga Sutras, pages 131 and 132) Vidyáranya, on the other hand, says: "Máyá is Prakriti and the Supreme Lord is the Lord of the Máyá. This world is pervaded by a portion of his essence. This Máyá is unsubstantial and indescribable, and yet it appears to be substantial. It is that which makes the world appear as existing as well as non-existing. To us it

has no existence apart from Chitta (Brahm) its substratum. Máyá is therefore not an independent entity, but depends upon Brahm; and yet because it makes the unattached appear as attached, it looks like an independent entity. The world cannot be explained and yet appears, because it is a creation of Máyá. Even the wisest are faced with ignorance whenever they try to explain the origin of the world. How, for instance, does a drop of vital fluid create (becomes changed into) a body with its organs? How does that body become sentient and intelligent? If you say it is due to the nature of the seed, how do you know it? If you say that wherever there is seed, there is a body, we do not see it in the case of a barren woman. In the end ignorance is your only refuge. Therefore the wise consider this world to be as wonderful as a juggler's trick. What can be more wonderful than that the vital seed should evolve into a conscious being with hands, forehead, feet and organs, and gradually grow to be a child, a youth, an old man, see, eat, smell, hear, go and come. And not only is it so in the case of a human body, but taking a tree also, how can such a tiny seed as that of a Banyan tree produce the large tree before you? We have therefore to accept the fact that all we see is the result of Máyá. In truth, there is no release or bondage, nor any one who is bound or released. Both the individual self (Jiva) and the Creator of the Universe (Ishwara) are calves begotten by the Kámdhenu (cow) of Máyá. Both may enjoy the milk of duality to their hearts' content, but it is non-duality (Adwaita) alone which is true. If you cite the case of even those who take the world to be illusory, acting in it like other beings, we reply that though such persons do move and act in the world, yet they know its real nature and do not, like the ignorant, believe themselves to be bound by it. Those who think knowledge of the true nature of things to be a disease consuming one's vitals, are wise indeed! What is there which they will not utter. Bharata and others, spoken of as knowers of Brahma in the Puránas, did not give up eating and other duties of life, only they cut off all sense of attachment to them." (Panchdasi Chittra Dipa Parkarana, abstracted.)

Lastly, Vashishtha makes all duality and all differentiation of name and form to be due to the will (sankalpa) of the

Primeval Purusha in the cosmos and of man in every-day life. In truth Brahman is above time, space and causality, but like one seeing objects in a dream, he sees within himself diversity of name and form, and because he sees it he becomes this diversified world, like a dreamer identifying himself with the objects of his dream. Time, space and causality appear to exist in him in some indescribable manner. With his *sankalpa* springs forth this world first in its subtle and then in its gross form. With the will to appear manifold, he appears manifold. As soon as he wills, "I shall multiply and be this world," he becomes so. First arises the will, the *sankalpa*, then the subtle body, which, becoming intensified, becomes the gross body. In this way when he wills, "I shall see," he sees with eyes. When he wills, "I shall hear," ears come forth, and so on, with the other organs of perception and action. Memory follows, the gross which was evolved from will, appears to be outside it. In truth, there is nothing outside the seer. It is his own mind which has made it appear so. His own mind it is which gives one the name of Brahmá, another of Vishnu, a third of Siva, a fourth this, a fifth that, and makes him avoid one thing and take to another. But like a phantom causing needless fear to a child till he knows that it is a mere phantom, a creation of his own imagination, the world binds the self so long as he does not know it to be a phantom of his own creation ; when he knows it to be so, the world does not bind him and he becomes released. In truth nothing is ever created. All creation is a mere appearance in Brahman, due to his own Máyá or Sakti. There is therefore only one means of release from the world, *viz.*, complete suppression of all action of the mind, complete forgetfulness of the visible through complete extinction of all notion of the "I" and "mine." For those who do so, the world ceases to exist as such and Brahman alone exists. All multiplicity and diversity is thus as much in the mind of the Supreme as Unity. "I am one, may I be many," and it becomes many. His first evolution is Mahat (consciousness), then Ahankára (egoism), then the five Tanmátrás (the elements of sound, touch, form, taste and smell in their causal state, then the five organs of perception, and the five of action,

and then the five gross elements of ether, air, fire, water and earth. These mingle in various proportions and from them are evolved various forms each according to its káma (will-desire) and (karma) deeds The Supreme Being (Brahma) pervades all as *Sat* (existence), *Chit* intelligence and *ananda* (bliss). In unconscious beings He is latent. In conscious beings He exists in a more manifested condition. There is nothing which does not partake of His energy. " Having created it, He entered it." The universe lives in Brahman, moves in Him, has its being in Him, and finally merges into Him. This is the final declaration of the Upanishads.

The Jiva—the individual self.

What then is the Jiva or the individual soul ? Is it Brahman Himself or a part or a reflection of Brahman ? Says the Upanishad : " Just as from a blazing fire fly sparks not different from the fire itself, even so, my dear, are various entitles produced from the Indestructible." (Mundaka Upanishad, Chapter II-1.) On the other hand, "just as the Sun though one in the heavens appears to be many because of its reflection in water, even so Brahman though one, becomes many because of His abiding in various bodies." When the individual self loses all consciousness of his being other than the Supreme self, then cease all distinction of image and object. This is the reflection theory the *bimba prati bimba váda* of the Sastras.

The *avachedyavachedaka váda* lays down that all limitation in the self is due to the conditions of time, space and causality, which are, however, imaginary, being mere forms of the mind like those in a dream, and that to realize the absolute it is necessary to merge the mind into the absolute. The *ajátaváda* holds that the individual self was never produced, and that in reality nothing has been caused, nor is there any bondage or release.

These are the various theories current among Indian Vedantins to explain the individuation of self. The followers of the Sankhya, the Nyaya and other dualistic schools believe in a plurality of souls, created by or evolved from the Supreme Self as already stated, and posit an All-wise, Omnipotent Creator. The old difficulty can, however, scarcely be said to have been solved either by Sankara's *vivartaváda* or by the other Vedantin's *bimba*, or *dristi sristi*, or the *parinama* or *janamvada*, because from the

very conditions of the human intellect, which is bound up with time, space and causality, we must for ever remain ignorant of that limitless unknowable power which is ever changing in form, but never in substance.

The result of the enquiry.

We must, therefore, as pointed out by Vidyáranya, either accept our ignorance as a fact and try to remove it by *Samyagdarshana* (true knowledge), which is the way of the Vedanta, and realize, by complete introspection (Samadhi), the unity of the individual and the Supreme selfs as taught in the Upanishads, and not carry argument into spheres where it should not be carried, or lapse into a comfortless materialism which leaves no place for moral responsibility or immortality or God. The Vedanta is not atheistic merely because it does not believe in anything limited by time, space and causality, be it a personal God, or a power of nature, however exalted. On the contrary, it seeks to realize that which is beyond all, the essence of all, the substratum of all, and the one without a second which transcends all attributes. If it defines *it* as "*neti, neti*," "not this, not this," or describes it in the neuter gender, it does so because to describe it as *this* or *that*, will be to bring it within the phenomenal. On the other hand, to ascribe to it either the masculine or the feminine gender would be ascribing to it the relation of sex, which does not belong to it. It therefore wisely declares Brahman "to be beyond both the known as well as the unknown," (Kenopanishad, II. 3,) "from whence all speech with the mind turns away, unable to reach it." (Taitreya Upanishad, II-4.) It takes man as he is and seeks to restore him to his true condition of unity with Brahman. This Brahman is realized as "*asti*," "is," or (ens). Such a realization is not to be accomplished by discussion, but by *samadhi* or contemplation. '*Santo ayam atma*' (this atma is silence) is the final declaration of the Vedánta. "When all the five senses, together with the mind, are at rest and the Buddhi (intellect) does not move, that is declared to be the supreme state." (Kath: VI—10.) "When all the fetters of the heart are broken, and all doubts are destroyed, then the mortal becomes immortal. When all desires that abide in the heart have ceased, then does the mortal attain to the immortal in this very life." (*Ibid*, 14 and 15.) "As

rivers flowing into the sea disappear, leaving all name and form behind, even so the knower of Brahman, freed from name and form, attains to that Supreme Purusha which transcends all." (Mundaka Upanishad, III—II—8.) So declare the Upanishads: "That supreme goal," says Vashishtha, "is reached only by silence. Having attained to it the empire of the world is worth a straw." The release of the Vedánta is thus not the attainment of anything new or unusual, nor is it, as has been supposed, total extinction, but release from the bondage of the conditioned and the manifestation of the true nature of the self which had become obscured under the influence of illusion. It is not total extinction, for it ought to be sharply distinguished from the state of deep sleep where one loses all consciousness. In the released state the soul does not have specific cognition, not on account of Avidya, but because then there is no second which it could be conscious of. Its condition then is one of complete non-division from Brahman and not *like that* of Brahman. It is then free, calm, devoid of all manifoldness or duality, verily Brahman itself. Brahman is the only reality, the world is an unreality, and the *jiva* is no other than Brahman. This is the finâle of the Vedánta. The goal of all, that is, within the sphere of speech and thought is the condition where one cognizes nothing outside himself. This is that universal forgetfulness which transcends the intellect. Extremes meet and the ordinary man of the world mistakes such a condition to be one bordering upon madness or idiocy. The absence of specific cognition does not, however, mean the absence of *all* cognition. On the contrary, as Patanjali, the author of the Yoga Sutras, says, the seer when he abides in his own nature, is cognition itself. He has then nothing different from himself to cognize—a condition which only those who have reached it, can realize.

Absolute unity being the final declaration of Hindu philosophy, the Supreme and the Individual Selfs, and the world could not, therefore, according to it be different from each other, but ultimately resolvable into one.

The individual soul is different from Brahman, because of its contact with limiting adjuncts. It can therefore be only spoken of as identical with Brahman with reference to its true condition, when after having purified itself with knowledge, it becomes one with Brahman. This is called the *Satyá bhedaváda*,

or the theory of non-difference in the true condition, and is the right view. When therefore the Vedánta says that there is no other seer, hearer, or cognizer but He, it refers, not to the condition of every-day life, but to the *Parmárthika sattá* the (true condition), where all that exists is resolved into *sat*. "The fiction of the creation of Jiva (the individual soul) from Brahman," says Vashishtha, "is a fiction resorted to for the purpose of elucidating the nature of the Jiva as not different from Brahman. In this manner the Jiva is also considered to be a part of Brahman, though it is in reality identical with the latter." (Yoga Vashishtha Nirvana Prakarna II, Chapter 188, verse I.) "Just as there is no difference between the Supreme and the individual self, so there is no difference between the individual self and the mind, nor between karma and the body. Karma is body. It is the mind, the I, the individual self. That Jiva is the Supreme Intelligent self of all. This is the essence of all teaching." (Yoga Vashishtha Uttapati Prakarna, Chapter 65.)

"They who apprehend the Jiva (soul) who is enveloped in the three cases of fire, water and earth, who has the three attributes of goodness, passion and darkness for his characteristics, to be the Lord Ishwara, partaking of the very nature of the Supreme, become objects of great regard in the world. That which is dreamless slumber (samprasada), whose body is this universe, that which knows all the worlds here, that in which the embodied soul rests and gratifies the deities (the senses), is Brahman, the effulgent eternal. Becoming pure in heart the yogin beholds that in the soul." (Moksha Dharama, Chapters 245 and 246.) "Just as the ether (*akasa*) though one, is seen having various colors—blue, black, &c.,—even so the self which is one, is seen by those under illusion to be separate in every creature. All that is here is one. He is Achhyuta (Brahma), nothing else here is. He is I, He is Thou, He is all this, do thou relinquish this illusion of diversity." (Vishnu Purana, III—9-22 and 23.) The arguments against the identity of the Supreme and the individual souls that on this hypothesis there would be no world, that all distinction of release and bondage, of karma and its results, of various classes and grades of beings, of society and its relations would disappear, is answered by saying that the Adwaita does not deny distinction in

the ordinary condition of life. In that condition the Jiva and the world are different from Brahman. But the Vedánta is not for those who believe in the reality of the world, but for those who wish to rise above it.

"All this business of I and Mine," says the Vishnu Purana, "is due to illusion. The Supreme is not an object of speech. The Individual self is the lord of the senses. By acquiring knowledge it becomes released. It then becomes one with the Supreme. Its difference is due to illusion. When knowledge is acquired, and all sense of diversity is gone, what will the difference of the Individual and the Supreme soul which does not in fact exist, do ?" (Part VI, Chapter 7.)

Modern tendencies.

Indian philosophers do not generally question the existence of the soul or its immortality. Both these are the accepted doctrines of almost all schools of thought in India, except the Charvakas and the Jains. The dispute between them is as to its identity with God, or whether it is one self which is in all, or a plurality of selfs. From the time of the Upanishads down to most modern times, it is the belief of every Hindu that the body only dies, not the soul. "There is no destruction of the individual self. The body alone dissolves away. The creature that dies only goes to another body. His dissociation from this combination of five elements (body) is its death. The self though not seen after the destruction of the body, is not extinguished, but like fire without fuel lives in space. Wrapped in diverse forms, it goes from body to body, unseen by ordinary men, but is perceived by those who with a keen intelligence perceive it by it." (Mahábhárata Moksha Dharma, Chapter 187.) It is only in modern times that materialism has come largely into vogue, and that also, among the educated classes of India under the influence of modern education. The mass of our people are not materialists. They all believe in a soul distinct from the body surviving it after death, and all their acts of religion and charity, all their oblations and gifts in honor of the dead, are dictated by no other consideration. Heaven and hell and future life are to them as stern realities as is their present life on earth. Not so universal is the belief of the educated classes. Most of them outwardly conform to the religion of their ancestors, but being ignorant of its very first principles, either despise it or do not care for it. To them the

body and its wants, the care of their families, name, position, money, making a figure in the world, are the only realities in life. They are not agnostics, nor can they be said to be atheists; for, unlike the agnostics of other countries, they never think over the problems of life nor take the trouble of arriving at any conclusion, even though it be a confession of ignorance. All that they do, is not to trouble themselves about these things at all, and because they never think about them, those acts of charity and mercy and kindness, which are common among their less educated brethren, are seldom seen among them. Learned in science which tells them of a vast rhythm of processes where nature cancels herself, the idea of an Omnipotent and Omniscient God, behind the phenomena of nature seems to be either absurd or superfluous, and thus to them responsibility to any power other than earthly power, or any life beyond the present, is unreal. This want of faith results in leaving in the lives of most of them a void which they find it difficult to fill up, especially in the waning years of life. A religious life, a life in which the question of man's destiny hereafter is not treated lightly, but receives the serious attention it deserves, where behind the ever-changing phenomena of consciousness, is recognized a power ever present, ever permanent, and where everything is made to conform to that power, may seem to be a life of sentimentalism to men of modern times, but that it is the only life worth living has been the conviction of the wisest and best of India in all times and circumstances.

God.

We have seen that to the Indian philosopher neither the world as world, nor the individual soul as such, has any reality. God alone is true. But the Upanishads first declare God to be that from which the origin, subsistence and dissolution of the world proceed, then as Truth (satyam), (gyanam) knowledge and (anantam) infinity, and finally as "*neti, neti,*" not this, not this.

But which of these is true? All. Two with reference to the world, in truth the last. Says the Mahábhárata: "He from whom this universe has sprung, Him by knowing whom persons of cleansed soul cross this ocean of life, Him who has not been declared by Vedic mantras and words, Him I shall now indicate. . . Himself liberated from the several kinds of taste, scent, sound, touch and form, He is incap

able of being grasped by the senses, unmanifest, without color, the One. He has created the five objects of senses for his creatures. He is neither male nor female, nor neuter, neither existent nor non-existent. Only those that are acquainted with Brahman behold Him." (Moksha Dharma, Chapter 201.)

"Indeed, Brahman, as perceived, may appear to be red, white, black, brown or bright. But neither on the earth, nor in the sky, nor in the waters of the ocean is there anything like it. Neither in the stars, nor in the lightning, nor in the clouds is its form to be seen; nor is it visible in the atmosphere, nor in the deities, nor in the moon, nor in the sun. Neither in the *Rik*, nor among the Yajus, nor among the Atharvans, nor among the pure Samans, is it to be found. Verily, O king, it is not to be found in Rathantara or Varhadrathan nor in great sacrifices. Incapable of being compassed and beyond the reach of the limited intellect, even the Universal Destroyer, after the Dissolution, is himself lost in it. Incapable of being gazed at, it is subtle as the edge of a razor and grosser than mountains. It is the basis upon which everything is founded; it is unchangeable; it is this visible (universe); it is vast; it is delightful. Creatures have all sprung from it and are to return to it. Free from all kinds of duality, it is manifest as the universe, and all-pervading. Men of learning say that it is without any change, except in the language used to describe it. They are emancipated that are acquainted with that in which this universe is established." (Mahábhárata Udyoga Parva, Chapter 43.)

The Sastras have always viewed God, as saguna (possessed of the attributes of Omniscience, Omnipotence, &c.), as well as nirguna without attributes; as beyond the range of speech and thought, as *not this*, *not this*—as that which remains after negation of everything finite. The former is for worship or devotion in ordinary life, the latter for the stage of realization of the highest self. For those who cannot attain to the latter, worship of the former is enjoined as preliminary to the highest realization. Thus in the Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna that though those who meditate upon the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Unchangeable, the

Immutable, the Eternal, having subdued all the senses, always equanimous, intent on the welfare of all beings, reach Myself. Yet greater is the trouble of those whose thoughts are set upon the unmanifest, for the path of the unmanifest is very hard for the embodied to reach. Therefore fix thy mind upon Me, place thy intellect in Me and thou shalt no doubt live hereafter in Me. If thou art unable to fix thy thought steadily upon Me, then do thou by practice of steadiness of mind seek to reach Me, O Dhananjaya! If thou art not equal to practice, then do thou be bent upon performing action for My sake. Even by doing action for My sake, thou shalt attain to perfection. If thou art unable even to do this, then, devoting thyself to Me, do thou be self-controlled and abandon the fruit of all action unto Me." (Chapter 12, 3—11.) This is true devotion which even the greatest advocates of non-duality have always preached and practised. Worship of God with attributes (saguna upásná) is a prominent feature in both the earlier as well as in later sastric literature. The Upanishads by inculcating the various meditations upon the person in the eye, in the lotus of the heart, in the sun, the udgitha, &c., mean to steady the mind for the final portion of Brahmavidya, the realization of absolute unity. The Mahábhárata is also full of devotion to Vishnu as the Supreme Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe. "Adored He adores, worshipped he worships. He is always worshipped in work. Those persons who are devoted to Him become freed from all calamity and fear in proportion to their devotion. Ye foremost of ascetics, even this is the path that I show unto you. I bow my head in reverence unto that Lord of the Universe, that Grandsire of all the worlds." Again in reply to the question of Yudhishthira as to who was the one god of the world, who was the sole refuge of all, by worshipping whom man obtains the highest good, what religion was the foremost of all religions, Bhishma said that by always worshipping with reverence and devotion that immutable Being (Vishnu), by meditating upon Him, by singing His praises, bowing unto Him, performing sacrifices unto Him, by uttering the glory of Him who is without beginning, end or destruction, Who is the Supreme Lord of all the world, Who is the Master and Controller of the Universe, one succeeds in transcending sorrow. Even this, in my judgment, is the foremost of all religions, *i.e.*, one

should always worship with devotion and sing the praises of the lotus-eyed Vishnu." (Mahábhárata Anusahsana Purva, Chapters 148 and 149.)

In the Puranas also it is declared that that single-minded devotion in which the devotee entirely forgets himself in the object of his devotion, is the only road to bliss. Says Prahlada to his fellow *asuras*: "To those who see no happiness in the enjoyments of this fleeting world, looking upon all as one's own self, is the only means of happiness, and that is the worship of the Eternal. All this is a manifestation of the Supreme, do you therefore look upon all with an equal eye and your troubles will be over. When confined by his father in a cave in the ocean, he meditated upon Vishnu as the self of all, as That in which the universe was woven like warp and woof, as That which was all, which was in all, and which was the refuge of all, till he became That which he was meditating upon and realized himself as Vishnu himself, as pervading all, as the eternal, the undecayed, the Supreme self, the Primeval Purusha." (Vishnu Purana I, Chapter 9.) This is the consummation of Bhakti or devotion, and the consummation of knowledge is no other.

The Bhagvat, the most popular book of devotion to Vishnu, opens with the following verse : "We bow to That Who is beyond all, Who is truth itself, Whose light dispels the mists of illusion, in Whom the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, illusory in themselves, appear as true, like a mirage in a forest, Who is all intelligence, Whose nature even the wisest fail to understand and Who imparted the Vedas to the first seer (Brahmá)." (Book I, Chap. , verse 1.) In another place it is said : "The great truth is the Pure, Perfect, Unchangeable Intelligence which is the same in and out. That is the significance of the word 'Bhagvat' (Lord) styled by the sages as Vasudeo. All else is a mere name." (*Ibid*, Book 5, Chapter 12.) For purposes of devotion the Lord is contemplated in various forms according to the needs of those who meditate upon Him. "May that God be propitious unto me who, although himself possessing no form or name, yet for extending His grace to those who worship at His feet, takes various forms, assumes various names, and performs various actions." (Book 6, Chapter 4.) "O God! Thou

art Absolute. Thy two-fold manifestation, one under Máyá and the other without it, is unknown to us. O Source of all good fortune! may my mind cherish Thy excellence, my tongue chant Thy glory, my body do Thy work. Without Thee I do not seek heavenly bliss, nor the empire of the whole world, nor the status of Brahmá, nor *siddhis* (powers) of Yoga, nor even emancipation itself. I pine for a sight of Thee like an unfledged bird pining for its mother, a hungry calf for its dam, or a young wife for her absent lord." (*Ibid*, Book 6, Chapter 11.) This dual system meets all human needs. Every one cannot at once rise to the Absolute and the Unconditioned. He must purify his mind by devotion to a conditioned and manifested ideal, till it is fit to reach the unconditioned. Worship of images or in temples of various forms of the deity, has no other meaning, and is enjoined not for those who can contemplate Him in his true nature, but for those less advanced than they. Hinduism thus has a place for men of every stage of development, high and low. The highest philosopher will find in it as much to meditate upon as the simplest rustic. But if our philosophy teaches absolute unity of Godhead, it does not also tell us to forget distinction in every-day life, nor worship or bow to all without discrimination. This is a mistake into which those who do not realize its true import are likely to fall. Says Principal Caird in his Philosophy of Religion: "In the Brahmanic conception of God it is not only impossible for the spirit of man to find permanent satisfaction, but it is one which if carried to its logical results, naturally gives rise to a reaction. It seems at first sight difficult to understand how a religion in which the idea of God is reached by rising above all that is finite and sensible, should be associated with a gross polytheistic worship and fatalistic morality such as we know to be the characteristic of Brahmanism. If God be conceived of as the Being which lies behind and is simply the negation of the phenomenal world, how shall we account for the seeming deification of almost every object in that world, the heavenly orbs, the material elements, plants, animals, rivers, the Indus, the Ganges, the Lotus flower, etc.? How shall we account for the unbridled license of a sensuous idolatry which, not content with actual existence, invents a thousand monstrosities, incongruous and offensive shapes and

symbols as expressions of the Divine ? Or, again, how should a conception of God which would seem naturally to lead to an ascetic morality and a life of abstraction from the gratification of sense, have, as its practical result, a social system in which the grossest impurities are not only permitted, but perpetrated under the sanction of religion ? The answer is that a pantheistic rather cosmic conception of God such as that of Brahmanism, not only offers no hindrance to idolatry and immorality,, but may be said to lead them by a logical necessity." (Pages 320, 321.) Now nothing can be more apart from the spirit of Hinduism than that its highest philosophy should lead to fetich worship or gross immorality or sensuality. The sastras have repeatedly laid down that "there are two forms of Brahman, that which is embodied and that which is unembodied. That which is embodied, is unreal and perishable ; that which is unembodied, is real and permanent. After this comes the teaching, *not this, not this.* There is nothing further than this. Its name is Truth of Truth. The Pranas (sense-organs) are true. But it is True of the True." (Brihad Aranyka Upanishad, Chapter 4, verses 1 and 6.) Again, "there is no image of Him whose name is great glory." (Swetaswatara Upainshad, Chapter 4, verse 12.) "There is no effect of Him nor organ of sense. None is equal to or greater than Him. His supreme power is manifold. His nature is the power of thought and action. There is no Lord of Him, nor ruler in the world, nor any sign. He is the cause of causes, the Lord of the senses. There is no begetter of Him, no master." (*Ibid*, Chapter 6, verses 8 and 9.)

To say that the various forms in which God is worshipped are real, is therefore not true. As has been repeatedly said, it is the *sahka chandra nyaya* of the sastras. Just as the lunar digit on the day of the new moon is not at once visible and the branch of a tree is pointed out to the beholder to look at steadily and when his attention is fixed to it, he sees the moon easily, even so is the worshipper told to worship some concrete object, and when his mind is steadied over it, to rise above it to the more abstract. The concrete be it a river, a tree, or stone, or man, or angel, or God, is a manifestation of the Divine Impersonal. But like all manifestation, it is perishable. Therefore, Hinduism instead of leading its follower from the abstract to the concrete, leads him upwards from the concrete to

the abstract, and idolatry cannot be said to be the logical result of its nonduality. It is because those who worship images do not rise above them, that their further progress is stopped. But for that philosophy is not responsible. The ordinary mind requires a concrete image of God, and Hinduism offers to it the worship of Vishnu under his many incarnations, or of Siva or of Durga, but it ever sets before it that highest of ideals the *Nirguna* (impersonal), Brahman. "In wood and stones is found the God of the ignorant, in the gods of the heavens of those more advanced. But of the wise God is verily in their hearts, and just as in their hearts so He is in all other hearts." "One God is hidden in all beings, He pervades all, is the innermost soul of all. He is the Lord of all actions, the abode of all, the witness, the intelligent One, devoid of attributes." (Swetaswatara Upanishad 5—II.) In the same way Hindu philosophy does not lead to sensualism or immorality nor inculcate license. Emphatically do the Upanishads tell us, "One who has not ceased from evil ways, who is not of a peaceful disposition, who is not ever watchful, whose mind is not calm, cannot reach Him even by knowledge." (Kathopanishad, 2—23.) And the history of those who have trodden this path, shows that not only had they to abstain from evil and lead pure and holy lives, but to be devoted to the good of all, to love all as their own selves. And it would be as wrong to charge the true philosophy of India with what we see in it now, as to charge the teachings of Christ with what we see in Christian countries now-a-days. Can we logically charge the Christianity of Christ with the wars, Inquisitions, burning of witches, and torture of men of science which disfigured European history in the past?

Contradictory attributes are ascribed to God in the sastras, because it is impossible to describe Him in human language. "He is far, yet near. He sees without eyes, hears without ears, grasps without hands, moves without feet, knows all, and is yet beyond the mind: comprehends all, and is yet beyond the intellect. He moves the vital forces, and yet is unmoved. He is *sat* the manifest, and the *asat*, nor yet even both. He has eyes, hands, heads, feet everywhere. He encompasses all. He presides over all the senses, and is yet beyond them. He bears all, and is yet unattached. He has no attributes, and yet enjoys all the attributes.

He is inside as well as outside all. He is moveable, and yet immoveable. He is undivided, yet divided." All these descriptions, however, only seek to convey some idea, remote though it be, of That which is beyond the sphere of speech and thought, which is the innermost self of all. All attributes can be predicated of Him, because without Him as substratum there can be no attributes; and yet in his true nature no attributes can be predicated of Him, and negation of all that we perceive by the senses or the mind is only possible. And yet that which is left after negation of all that is finite, is not a vacuum or void or nothing (*Sunya*), but a something which only those who devote themselves to Him know. The language of mysticism has been the same in the east as in the west. It could not be otherwise. Dionysius the Areopagite says that "the Absolute Truth is neither soul nor intellect, nor has it imagination, opinion, reason, or intelligence; nor is it reason or intelligence, nor is it spoken or thought. It is neither number nor order, nor magnitude nor littleness, nor equality nor inequality, nor similarity nor dissimilarity. It neither stands nor moves, nor rests. It is neither essence nor time, nor eternity." Jacob Booheme describes "Primal love as that which may fitly be compared to nothing; for it is deeper than anything, and is as nothing with respect to all things, for as much as it is not comprehended by any one of them. And because it is nothing respectively, it is therefore free from all things, and is that only good which man cannot utter or express what is there, there being nothing to which it may be compared to or to express it by." The last word of philosophy and religion is therefore *Silence*, "Let one take to Silence and not let even his mind act: withdraw yourself from the Visible, retire into your ownself, your ownself is Brahman." This is the conclusion of the sastras on the nature of God.

The highest Indian philosophy is thus a philosophy of unity of the world and the individual self in God. The dispute among Indian philosophers is *not* about the existence of God, for most of them believe in it, and even Kapila, the author of the Sankhya system, did not in saying that the existence of Ishwara (God) was not proved, imply that He did not exist, but that His existence was not established by the ordinary means of proof employed in human knowledge. Those who look upon Him

as the creator of the world, as the dispenser of the fruit of action, as the Lord of all and the *jiva* as a being, his emanation or part are also right to a certain extent; but not completely. Relatively, duality is true. Ultimately, non-duality is true. This is the conclusion of the sastras.

III.—The Law of Karma, Free Will and Liberty.

The question of the freedom of the will does not exercise the Indian mind to the same extent as it does the western mind. Here the result of past *karma* is as much an article of faith as the influence of exertion. "Some enter the womb for assuming new bodies, others become inanimate objects according to their work, according to their knowledge" (Kathopanishad 5--7.) "Attached where his mind is to, there he goes according to his *karma.* Having enjoyed the fruit of his *karma* there, he comes back again to this world for performing *karma.* But this is for the person of desire. For him who has no desire, who is free from desire, whose desire has been fulfilled, and whose desire is in the self, his vital airs do not leave the body. Being Brahman himself he attains to Brahman." (Brihad Aranyaka Up. 6—4—6.) This is the law of *Karma.* There are three kinds of Karma, *sanchit* (accumulated), *prarabdha* (now bearing fruit) and *ágámi* (that which is to bear fruit hereafter.) All action leaves its resultant impression upon the mind. This is called Vásná whose accumulated load determines one's future and shapes his character and happiness or misery in life. But there may be other tendencies latent in him. Only that which was powerful attracted to it its like, and the whole assumed a shape capable of determining the future of the individual in one life. And yet he has always in him that by which he can modify the result of past *karma*. If he acts up to it, the *karma* is modified from bad to good, and is finally destroyed. Exertion is as potent a factor in influencing one's future as destiny. This is the well established doctrine of both Hindu religion and Hindu philosophy. *Avidya*, *kama* and *karma* (error, desire and karma) are the three postulates of existence. All creation is due to these. Even at the end of a cycle of creation, the *karmas* of embodied beings remain in their subtle form to fructify at the next cycle. It is exertion that brings the hidden tendencies for good into play, and brings about change resulting in the highest knowledge which

burns up all *karma*, except that which is bearing fruit and with it re-incarnation.

European philosophers did not hitherto believe in the doctrine of *karma*. But now they are showing a tendency to regard the Hindu view as not quite untenable. Says Huxley : "The moral and intellectual essence of man does veritably pass from one fleshly tabernacle to another, and does really transmigrate from generation to generation. In the new-born infant the character of the stock lies latent, and the Ego is little more than a bundle of potentialities. But, very early these become actualities; from childhood to age, they manifest themselves in dullness or brightness, weakness or strength, viciousness or uprightness; and with each feature modified by confluence with another, if by nothing else, the character passes on to its incarnation in new bodies.

"The Indian philosophers called character, as thus defined, 'Karma.' It is this Karma which passed from life to life and linked them in the chain of transmigrations; and they held that it is modified in each life, not merely by confluence of parentage, but by its own acts. They were, in fact, strong believers in the theory, so much disputed just at present, of the hereditary transmission of acquired characters. That the manifestation of the tendencies of a character may be greatly facilitated, or impeded, by conditions, of which self-discipline, or the absence of it, are among the most important, is indubitable; but that the character itself is modified in this way is by no means so certain; it is not so sure that the transmitted character of an evil-lover is worse, or that of a righteous man better, than that which he received. Indian philosophy, however, did not admit of any doubt on this subject; the belief in the influence of conditions, notably of self-discipline on the Karma, was not merely a necessary postulate of its theory of retribution, but it presented the only way of escape from the endless round of transmigrations." (Huxley's Evolution and Ethics, pages 61 - 63.)

The doubt raised by Huxley does not seem to be correct, for not only is the manifestation of the tendencies of a character facilitated or impeded by self-discipline, or the absence of it, but even the transmitted character of an evil-doer can be changed for the better by a pure life. "The current of our

desires," says Vashishtha, " is flowing between the two channels of good and evil. It is only by our own exertion that we can turn it towards good. If the mind is directed towards right, it takes its course towards right. The belief that man is guided by destiny and only acts as he is led to, is a delusion. It is one's own exertion which secures to him what he aims at."

" The gods," says the Mahábhárata, " do not watch over one, stick in hand, like a shepherd watching a flock of sheep. Those whom they wish to protect they incline towards good deeds." " One's own exertion is the soil and destiny (the sum of one's acts in previous birth) is the seed. The harvest grows from the union of both. The luminous bodies in the firmament, the sun, the moon, the winds, even Vishnu himself, the gods, rishis, royal sages,—have all attained to their high status through evolution by dint of their own exertions. Man's powers, if properly exercised, follow his destiny, but destiny alone is incapable of conferring any good. Where exertion is wanting, destiny does not help the man who is steeped in ignorance and avarice. There is no inherent power in destiny. When one's own exertion is put forth, then does destiny show its hand." (Mahábhárata Anusashsana Parva, Chapter 6.) It is a disregard of this teaching of the Sastras that has induced that apathy in our people which has proved their ruin on so many occasions. On the contrary, if in spiritual as well as in temporal matter, the dictum of the Sastras as to the value of exertion had been followed, the Hindus would not have been the people they now are. We have made ourselves what we are, and it lies with ourselves to make or mar our future. It is wrong to lay the fatalism which is now so largely met with among our people at the door of the Sastras. They have ever applauded a life of action as much for the man of the world as for the aspirant after liberation. The former is as much enjoined to act his part in life well, as the latter to be devoted to the good of all. Had inaction (tamas) been the creed of the Rishis, Krishna would not have preached the gospel of disinterested performance of duty at the field of Kurukshetra, nor Sankara made efforts to infuse vitality into the spirit of Hinduism, nor later religious reformers to fight against error and dogma, nor would Yudhishthira, Asoka, Vikram have ruled their kingdoms to make their subjects happy. Human volition modifies the laws of nature, not by violating them but using them. Each new action is

a link in the chain of causation adding with each link of the same kind and finally resulting into what constitutes the character of the individual. But the first volition, as well as every subsequent one, has its true cause in the scheme of the Universal Mind to bring about a certain result which both in the life of the individual as well as of the nation acts through subordinate agencies, variously called gods, the higher powers of nature, or divine beings. The difference between the Sastric view and the western view as to freedom of the will and necessity, is that according to the Sastras acts done under the belief that man is a free agent, are really done under the play of impulses which lay dormant, but are roused according to the plan of the Universal Mind, while the western view does not recognize this, but makes man act without any such impulse. And yet the belief in the freedom of the will is a healthy belief, for without it man would cease to be the responsible being he should feel himself to be.

It is said in the Upanishads, "He to whom He wishes to lead to higher conditions, even He makes him act righteously." (Kaushitaki Upanishad III—8.) It is also said in the Gita,. "The Lord, O Arjuna, resides in the heart of all beings, turning them round like puppets on a machine under the influence of His Own Maya." (XVIII.—61.) This and the doctrine of Karma satisfactorily explain the inequality of conditions in life in the world. For although God is the dispenser of the fruit of action, yet He does so with reference to the Karma of all creatures and not independently of it. The inequality of condition in the world is not His fault, but is due to the merit and demerit earned by each creature in each incarnation. It is like rain, which though it waters all seeds equally, yet the plant of which it was the seed is only produced from it. Therefore, as Krishna says in the Gita, "I serve men as they serve me." The good become good by doing good, and the bad by doing evil. The result of past karma is there, but it is capable of being modified by good karma in the present. It is the Universal Mind which raises in one good desire and in another evil, prompts him to act, though under the belief that he is a free agent in all he does. When, however, the individual mind brings itself in full accord with the Divine Mind, its acts are thenceforward regulated by the Higher Power without its making efforts to regulate them. It is only when it places its

individuality in opposition to the Highest Mind that inequality of condition with its attendant pain and sorrow arise. All acts are caused by desire, which in its turn is due to the action of the mind. The mind is in reality one with the individual self, and the individual self with the Supreme Self. If therefore you attune your mind to the Supreme Self, its acts will be the acts of the Supreme Self, and the question of equality or inequality of worldly conditions will cease to trouble you. Therefore the knower of Brahman becomes an instrument in the hands of the Lord to work out his behests. Good and evil are there in man's own nature, and the current of desire is running both ways. So long as his mind is imperfect he must train it by righteous conduct towards good. When he has brought it in unison with the Universal mind and known its nature, then action ceases to be action and karma, and with it all responsibility disappears. Till then man is responsible for his acts, and it is only the sage who can say, "I feel no joy in having done good, nor sorrow in having done evil." This has unfortunately been lost sight of, and the result is that inaction which now characterizes the Hindus as a people.

IV.—The Summum Bonum, and How to Attain it.

Complete merging of the finite into the infinite, is the realization of the embodied self as the self of all. Complete destruction of all sense of separateness, all sense of I or mine is the goal, and various steps are indicated in the Sastras for reaching it. They are, however, summed up in the word *Renunciation*. Says the Upanishad: "They (the rishis) did not attain to immortality through offspring or wealth, but through renunciation alone." The Mahábhárata also says: "Without renunciation one does not attain to happiness, nor to the Supreme, nor sleeps happy. Let one be therefore happy by renouncing everything." Says also Vashishtha: "They are the greatest of heroes, the greatest of Mahatmas, the greatest of sages, who have subjugated this mind which is bent towards objects of sense through *avidya*. There is only one cure for the troubles of this world, the source of all misery, and it is the subjugation of one's own mind. Hear the essence of all knowledge, and after hearing it, ponder well over it. Desire of enjoyment of objects of sense is the only bondage here, its renunci-

ation is release. What is the use of other Sastras, only do this much. What appears to you to be pleasurable, do you look upon it as fire and poison.'' (Sthiti Prakarna, Chapters 351—4.) It is, however, easier to walk on the edge of a sword than to steady that which is unsteadier than the wind. The struggle is hard and the road rough and the path narrow. And yet there are men who have climbed it. These may be one or two in a thousand, but that this has been the ideal of the wisest and best of mankind all the world over, is undoubted.

Amidst jarring beliefs and conflicting dogmas, this and this alone has been the universal religion in all times everywhere. Its first injunction is to cease to do evil. The aspirant to the goal has next to cultivate the virtues of adherence to truth, discrimination of the fleeting from the permanent, renunciation of objects of sense, fortitude in suffering, faith in a *guru* or teacher, and intense desire for release.

"Absence of pride and hypocrisy, abstention from injury, forgiveness, rectitude of conduct, obedient service of teacher, purity, reticence, control of the mind, distaste for objects of sense, absence of egotism, realization of the evils of birth, death, old age and disease, non-attachment to sons, wife, house and other things, constant equanimity of temper in good and evil fortune, constant devotion to Me, love of solitude and distaste for company, constant study of works treating of the highest self, realization of the object of knowledge—even this is knowledge. All else is ignorance." (Bhagvad Gita, Chapter III—7-11.) Through self-exertion, the struggle between the higher and the lower natures must be fought out and the lower gradually made the organ for the expression of the higher, before any success is achieved. Unselfish performance of duty for the sake of duty, without regard to the fruit, gradually leads to the subordination of the lower to the higher self, first of the family circle, then of the society one moves in, then of the country he lives in, and finally of humanity at large. The aim of Vedánta is to bring about such a reconciliation of man's higher and lower natures as to fit him ultimately for the full knowledge of what he is and what the world he sees around him is. This knowledge is to be acquired by study, possession of a keen intellect, company of the good, and constant practice of introspection. Just as one wishing to sleep has to lie down on a bed and withdraw

his mind from all thoughts of the world before he can enjoy sound slumber, even so the aspirant for release from the world has gradually to withdraw himself from the things of the world. And just as the sleeper has to bring his mind to the sleeping condition before he can have sleep, even so has the aspirant for release to direct his mind towards the realization of Brahma before he can realize it. The first is called *Vatragya* (renunciation), and the second, *Abhyasa* (practice). The first is analogous to the dreaming condition, and the latter to the condition of deep slumber of everyday life. There are two paths leading to the goal, the path of the Yoga (suppression of the mind) and the path of Gyana (realization of unity) by constant practice of the thought. "I am all this" or "neither I nor this *is*, Brahma alone is." Some achieve success by one, some by the other. In the Sastras both are recognized. The Yoga path is shorter though rougher than the Gyana path. There the aspirant has either to control his mind through control of the incoming and outgoing breath and fix it on the place where the two meet in the lotus of the heart or twelve fingers outside the body, or on a particular spot in body or a particular object, till he becomes the object of his concentration and no specific cognition is left.

The other path is divided into seven stages by Vashishtha and other text-writers. I quote from my introduction to the Ashtavakra Gita:

"The first is right desire (*subhecha*). When man after having tasted the pleasures of the senses, finds them all to be unreal, and resulting in nothing but pain, and turns his thoughts inwards, he begins to question himself as to what after all is this panorama known as the world; what have I to do in it; how far actions which give but fleeting fruits can serve my highest end; why should I waste my life in taking part in this juggler's show; what should I do to cross this ocean of life, and where shall I find bliss which knows of no decay? This is the beginning of right desire. Actuated by it he avoids all foolish or idle talk, does not take pleasure in the frivolities of ordinary life, loves solitude and avoids society, does all the good he can, shuns evil, and does nothing which is likely to cause pain to others. His words become full of sweetness and wisdom, and he begins to have love for

all. Even this tends to raise him higher than his fellows, and brings the god in him into greater prominence. But he does not stop here. On the contrary, wherever and whenever he can, he seeks the company of the wise and the good and devotes his time to the study of, and meditation upon, the problems of life. Firmly resolved to cross the ocean of the world, he constantly lives in the company of those who both by learning and practice of Truth, are likely to lead him onwards. Performance of good actions and controlling of the mind and senses from running astray, become a part of his nature and he enters the second stage known as the *Suvicharna* or right meditation. Here he sees what he has to do and what not, keeps constant communion with his inner self and tries to overcome pride, anger, avarice, affection, and all that binds him to the world. He is now qualified for the third stage, where he begins to realize, in retirement, the full significance of the great sayings, "Thou art That," "I am Brahman." The next step in renunciaton makes his life more ascetic, his habits simpler, and his self-discipline more rigid, till two kinds of non-attachment dawn upon him. The first is where he sees himself neither as the doer of action nor the enjoyer of the fruit thereof, nor standing in the way of another doing what pleases him. He no longer attaches himself to anything whatever, but knows that God ordains all, and that happiness or misery is not of his doing. Realizing that all activity of the manas (concrete mind) leads to nothing but misery, he lets it have as little work as possible, and prepares himself for fuller renunciation of things of the world. Company of the good, study and reflection constantly practised, soon lead him on to the second stage of non-attachment, where he finds that for him there is nothing left to do but to abide in his own self. All he did in his past incarnations having been nearly burnt up by the fire of knowledge and realization of the Infinite, he tries to rise above both speech and thought, and betakes himself to silence. The mind does not now run towards things of the outside world, but self-centred seeks to merge itself into that which is Truth, Infinity and Bliss itself. Should the body fall before he has gone further, he has to return to the Sansara. But even then he incarnates in the family of the good, the wise,

and the pious, where the practices of his former life serve to carry him onwards. In these three stages which interlap each other, the world does not quite cease to exist though it loses the reality it once possessed. Persons who have attained to these three stages, act their part in life, but in a spirit of greater tranquillity than others. Such men serve as beacon lights to humanity. Good becomes a part of their nature and evil can never come out of them. What they do, they do for others and their actions are guided by that highest of motives, the absence of self. Divine men like Rama, Janaka, Bhishma, Krishna, and Yudhishthira, among householders, and Vashishtha, Vyasa and Viswamitra among Rishis, may be cited as examples of those who acted their respective parts in life, either as teachers of mankind, or as kings ruling their kingdoms for the good of their subjects, or as counsellors of kings, or as generals fighting for their cause, or as authors of works which live as long as the world lasts. The fourth stage (*Satwápatti*) is that of the accession of purity where the world appears like a dream. It has now lost its character of existence separate from the Infinite and is cognized as Truth and Bliss itself. But though unity is here cognised, duality is not yet fully merged into it. The mind, however, now rests in pure goodness (Sudh satva), though the other two attributes of Rajas and Tamas have not yet altogether ceased to exist. In the next stage, the stage of complete non-attachment (*asansakti*), the mind becomes entirely detached from the visible, like one in deep and peaceful slumber. It does not function though it exists in latency. All duality has disappeared, all specific cognition gone, and the sage abides more completely in the Infinite. His actions now becoms like those of a child, simple and guileless, and yet he carries on the ordinary functions of life. His thought is, however, constantly directed towards his own Atma. In ancient Hindu literature men, like Suka and Bharata, attained to this condition. In modern times such instances are rather rare. The next stage is that of *Turyá*, the fourth condition, which transcends the states of wakefulness, dream and deep slumber. For one who abides in it, nothing appears to exist but Brahman, Truth, itself. For him there is neither existence nor non-existence; neither I, nor the absence thereof. Meditation of non-duality and avoidance of duality have ceased to be necessary for him. All doubt has disappeared. All fetters of the heart have been cut asunder. If the

Karma which has given him his present incarnation, is yet unexhausted, he lives it out; but he is no longer of the world nor of anything in it. He is a *jiwan mukta*, or one emancipated in life. Like a lamp in a windless spot, supremely blessed, full in and out, as if he had gained something unusual, but in reality abiding in that which was in him always, (Brahman,) he becomes verily Brahman himself. The last stage is, that which is beyond the fourth—*Turyátita.* It is not an object of speech or thought. Some call it Brahman, some Siva, some the supreme abode of Vishnu, some the separation of the Prakriti (nature) from the Purusha (the Supreme Self). All these are, however, names serving to convey but an imperfect notion of that of which no notion can be conveyed by anything in human language, or anything appertaining to human thought. On entering this stage the sage becomes a *videhmukta* or free from embodied existence. Like rivers losing their name and form in the wide ocean, the sage, free from both name and form, attains to that which is beyond all, the Supreme, the ever-effulgent Purusha, knowing Brahman, he becomes Brahman itself.

This is the goal of the Vedánta, the philosophy of India which has led its wisest and best out of the Sansara. It still exercises, and shall always exercise, a deep influence on the lives and thoughts of all of its people. The conditions of modern life are generally not so favourable to its attainment as those in which life was simpler. But even now men and women of all ranks and conditions look upon it as the crowning work of life. It has a fascination for them which outsiders can but faintly appreciate. The highest and the best here seek no other happiness, but to avoid this recurring cycle of birth and re-birth which to them is fraught with nothing but misery. Kings sacrifice for it their thrones. The rich relinquish for it their most valued possessions. All worldly ties are cut asunder, and those who make any approach to it are worshipped as gods and mahatmas (great souls). Temples are raised in honour of those who have sacrificed the self, and their actions are held up as ideals for humanity to follow. And so great is the love of the genuine article, that even those who show the counterfeit, succeed in earning some of the respect and honour which ought to be reserved for the true and the real. (Introduction to Ashtavakra Gita by the author, pages 1—6.)

Modern science stops short at resolving the world into matter and motion and declares its inability to penetrate into the mystery of creation further. This the Vedanta does, for, behind both matter and motion, it also lays down an ever-permanent substratum, of which matter and motion are manifestations. It affirms that it is the mind which has made matter to appear what it is, and makes the mind itself figment of avidya (nescience), the manifested *sakti* of Brahman, as *gyana* and *kriya* (knowledge and action). Behind all the fleeting sense-impressions, beneath all mental acts, it declares the presence of the ever-permanent, ever-present self, now appearing as this, now that. This is the atma, a realization of which leads man to bliss. Material science draws him away from himself, and by increasing his desires only increases his misery. Mental science lands him into a comfortless idealism. The Vedanta therefore rightly calls both avidya or illusion. If modern science deals with things of the present, let it do so. The Vedanta does not quarrel with it for that. But it tells science that unless the knot is cut, and the problem of life solved, there is no happiness, even by all that science may achieve. The multiplex manifestations of the material or mental world which is all that science has yet concerned itself with, however useful they may be for ordinary life, can never serve the highest end of man. It is only the complete merging of the phenomenal which does so. "Things done and undone, pairs of opposites, when they are set at rest, and for whom? Impermanent is all this, undermined by three-fold misery, void of essence, full of blemish, fit to be cast away. Having realized this, one attains to peace." (Ashtavakra Gita.)

The Vedanta therefore tells man to see himself in all beings and all beings in himself, and realize himself to be that Supreme Intelligence in which the world rises like waves in the ocean. It is not a mere intellectual system like other systems of thought; but one for deep meditation. A mind functioning outside is the world, a mind resting in itself is Brahman. The former is the state of duality with its joys and sorrows; the latter of bliss. "When all the five senses, together with mind, are at rest and the Buddhi (intellect) does not move, that is declared to be the supreme state." (Kathopnishad VI, 10.) "When all the fetters of the heart are broken, and all doubts are destroyed, then the mortal becomes immortal. When all

desires that abide in the heart have ceased, then does the mortal attain to the immortal in this very life." (*Ibid* 14 and 15.) This is the *summum bonum* of the Vedanta,—not the attainment of anything new or unusual, nor total extinction, but release from bondage and manifestation of the true nature of the self which had become obscured under the influence of illusion, extinction of duality and realization of unity.

The effect of the Vedanta upon every-day life.

This philosophy is, however, not a philosophy for the cloister alone but can be a guide in practical life, and those who deny it have no personal knowledge of the condition of those who live Vedanta. Thus according to Professor Huxley its *summun bonum* is "a state of impassive quasi-somnambulism which, but for its acknowledged holiness, might run the risk of being confounded with idiocy," and it leads "to the abandonment of property, social ties, family affections, and common companionship, until all that remains of a man is the impassive extenuated mendicant monk, self-hypnotized into cataleptic trances, which the deluded mystic takes for foretastes of final union with Brahman." (Evolution and Ethics, page 65.) The history of Indian thought and Indian action, as well as the lives of the best Indian heroes and sages which I have described above, furnishes, however, the most decided refutation to these charges. All Indians of note, who have left their mark upon their country's civilization, were as great in action as in their realization of the truths of Vedanta. They were no mere dreamers of unity, but showed by their work in life that the theoretical and the practical are but expressions of different aspects of the same process. "To the conception of righteousness, goodness, holiness, which dwells in the mind of the good, or the pious man, he seeks to give outward actuality or realization, and so to make the mere physical relation of things and the function of animal life instinct with the life of the spirit, to make the outward world the expression of the inner world of thought." (Caird's Spinoza, page 256.) When the truth of the Vedanta is fully realized, the world assumes a newer and more beautiful aspect. It loses all its terrors and the sage's work in it becomes his re-creation.

Our Sastras have never reserved *moksha*, or release, for the hermit in the forest, or the quasi-somnambulist in the cloister,

nor have they ever inculcated abandonment of all duty in life as the condition precedent to its attainment. The emancipated (Jivan Mukta) realizes not only his unity with Brahm, but also his unity with his fellow-creatures. He does them no harm, not from mere feelings of pity or charity, but from a much higher view, because he looks upon everyone as his own self. Before the attainment of knowledge he did his duty unselfishly, because it prepared the way for the acquisition of knowledge. After such acquisition, he does his work in life to preserve the bonds of society and to lead others to the goal he has himself attained. Having trodden the path, there is no longer any injunction or prohibition for him, but even he acts according to the dictates of virtue, because to do so is to lead humanity onwards. Living in the world and yet above its joys and sorrows, like the lotus leaf which lives in water and is yet untouched by it, doing his appointed work in life, not for the sake of reward or fruit here or hereafter, but because it is a duty to be done, living neither in the past nor in the future, but in the eternal Now, the true Vedantin passes his life till the *Karma* which gave him his present incarnation is exhausted by fruition. "To the sage," says Vashishtha, "there is no object in abandoning action, nor in performing it. He does what is required of him for the moment. So long as life has to run its appointed course, let one do what is required of him. What is there in inaction? With a mind always tranquil and purified, everything which one does is ever free from error. In this world many a person freed from attachment lives either as a householder, or as a royal sage ruling a kingdom, or as a teacher expounding the Vedas, or as an ascetic in the forest. To cross the ocean of life, residence in a forest or austere penances are not necessary. He whose mind is free, crosses it." (Yoga Vashishtha Nirvana Prakarna, Chapter 199, abstracted.) In another place he says: "He is said to act his part well in the world who does his duty without any ado or anxiety, maintains his serenity of temper and purity of heart without any taint of egotism or envy, continues in the same tone and tenour of mind, and retains the clearness of his understanding at all times without feeling joy or sorrow at anything. He performs his duties in the best manner possible, who knows what is to be done at the proper time, and sits unconcerned with it at other times." (*Ibid*, Chapter 115, abstracted.)

Such a person is in Samadhi (meditation) even though he be engaged in the busiest affairs of the world. Samadhi is nothing but fullness inside, which the sage always has. It is not by sitting in a jungle and letting the mind wander that one becomes a sage or realizes the fruits of concentration. On the contrary, if his mind is steady, he realizes the fruit of contemplation even in the most crowded haunts of men. There is no other indication of sage except that he has no desire, no thought of objects of sense, no attachment, no aversion. Such a one sees all as himself. For him another's possessions are devoid of attraction not for fear of law or society, but from his very nature. Whether he be a person of affluence or poor, he is ever happy. He may live in his family, surrounded by all the enjoyments of life, or engage in ascetic meditation in lonely jungles, he is ever the same, not troubled with the thought of impending death nor exultant at the prospect of long life, but ever calm and serene. He does what comes before him, but never that which is opposed to the good of others. Says Vashishtha to Rama: "Abiding in that supreme self which is ever pure and ever effulgent; do you, freed from all sense of duality, and resting in that which is bliss itself, rule your kingdom virtuously." And Rama replies, "Knowing the world to be Brahman itself, I am neither pleased nor grieved. I shall do what is required of me. My illusion is gone."

Some time ago the question was put by me to one of the leading Vedantins of India, whether for one who has realized the truth of the Vedanta, it was necessary to continue to practise the virtues of self-restraint and renunciation which he did in the earlier stages. And the answer was that the condition of human life requires that one should constantly keep watch over his mind and not let it run adrift, nor cherish what is mean or low. The means of realization which he once adopted ought now to become habitual to him, and he must never lose sight of them. The indication of one who has become That which has no form and for whom this beginningless illusion of the world has vanished, is that desire, anger, worry, and avarice daily appear in him to be on the decrease. In the higher stages when such a person rises from *samadhi*, desire and aversion would appear in him like a line drawn on the surface of water to disappear at the very next moment. In the earlier ones they appeared like a line drawn upon sand to disappear with the

blowing of the wind of meditation. Before that they were in their full force. So long as the principle of egotism lasts, the attributes of that principle, *viz.*, desire and aversion, must remain, though in a greatly attenuated form.

There is thus practically no other difference between a true Vedantin and any other man, except that he does what comes to him more cheerfully and calmly than the latter. He neither indulges in unlicensed action on the one hand, nor becomes dumb or mute, or an idiotic idier on the other. No doubt sayings like "there is no injunction nor prohibition for him who moves in the path of that which is above the three qualities," or "let him go about in the world like one in a dream, a mad man or an idiot," are now and then found in some Vedantic books of later times. But unless they were meant not to be interpreted too literally, they cannot be true. The best teachers of Vedanta observed the rules of society like other men. Did Vashishtha, Bhishma, Vyasa, Janaka, Krishna, Vikrama and others who were all great Vedantins, ever disregard the rules of society? Were Suka and Sankara ever unmindful of personal purity, or indulged in forbidden action, ate forbidden food, talked of forbidden things, or behaved like mad men or idiots. In modern times also the best Vedantins, both among householders as well as among ascetics, though possessed of fortitude in suffering, never indulge in unlicensed action or unlicensed talk. Men openly defying the rules of decency or indulging in forbidden things, or acting like idiots or mad men cannot therefore be true Vedantins, but egotists of the lowest sort.

Truth and error have always existed side by side in all ages and all countries. But though the burden of the song has ever been to sacrifice present enjoyment for future good, man indulges in every thing except renunciation of desire. "Know, O holy man," says Vashishtha, "it is the relinquishing of errors which is the true philosopher's stone. Try to get that in possession and set yourself above the reach of misery. It is the relinquishment of attachment to objects of sense which gives the purest bliss. It is the abandonment of desire for the things of this world which is true sovereignty." This is real Vedanta.

It was, therefore, that Sri Chaitanya said to Sribas, who had lost his only son, "No servant of Sri Krishna can have sorrow. Besides, let me remind you of one thing, neither you nor I have

come here to enjoy. It is misery all around us. We live to remove the misery of others as far as that is possible. Surely we have no time to think of our own.''

Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control,
These three alone lead life to Sovereign power.
Yet not for power, that of itself,
Would come uncalled for ; but to live by rule,
Acting the rule we live by without fear,
And because right is right to follow right,
Were wisdom in the scorn of sequence.

This is Tennyson's gospel of practical life and that of the Vedanta is no other. With the realization of the átmá (self) within us as the Lord, and making everything subjective and objective within and without subordinate to it, all misery will disappear. But in order to realize it, we must *feel* our unity, not only with all mankind, but also with all nature, animate and inanimate, as a practical and a living fact. "Each for himself" is man's ordinary condition of life, but till it is *each for others above himself*, as it was with the sages of ancient India, man can never be happy. To recognize some ideal standard superior to our mere animal nature, and try to approach it, to see things as they are, and discern clearly the boundary between right and wrong, to make all around us, not only in our own household, but also in our city, our country, nay, humanity in general, happy by good deeds, good words and good thoughts, to bear the trials and troubles of life in an even temper, is that practical Vedanta which leads the way to both Jivan Mukti and Videh Mukti (emancipation both in life and after death).

ज्ञानं तत्वविचारेण निष्कामेणापि कर्म्मणा ।
जायते क्षीणतमसां विदुषां निर्म्मलात्मनाम् ॥

Knowledge is acquired by the wise, whose darkness has been destroyed, and whose minds have been purified, by reflection upon truth and unselfish performance of duty.

Says Bhartri Hari :—" Say, my friend, what fear is there for the sage who has fortitude for his father, charity for his mother, contentment for his helpmate, truth for his companion, forgiveness for his sister, self-control for his brother, the earth for his bed, the quarters for his covering, and the nectar of divine knowledge for his food." And truly blessed is he who lives in such company, so says not only the Vedanta of India, but also the sages and philosophers of the world in all times and circumstances.

IV.—LIFE AFTER DEATH.

जीवापेतं वावकिलेदंम्रियते् नजीवोम्रियते ॥

Verily, this body dies when bereft of the soul; the soul dies not. (Chandoyga Upanishad.)

स्थूलानि सूक्ष्माणि बहूनिचैव रूपाणि देही स्वगुणैर्वृणोति ।
क्रियागुणैरात्म गुणैश्चैतेषाम् संयोगहेतुरपरोपिदृष्टः ॥

The Jiva (soul) assumes many forms, gross or subtle, according to its attributes. By the qualities of its actions, as well as from the attributes of its body, it appears, though it is without any difference, to be the cause of the union of those forms. (Swetaswatara Upanishad.)

We have seen that the Sastras declare the soul to be undecaying and immortal, and that birth and death can be predicated only of the body and not of the soul. Belief in the immortality of the soul and of life after death, is as universal among the Hindus as that of the infallibility of the law of Karma, or that our life upon earth is a source of misery. So self-evident is the immortality of the soul held to be by the Hindu Sastras, that they never attempt to prove it, but only point out the roads travelled by the spirit after it leaves the body, the various orders of being through which it passes, according to its knowledge and work, and the means of attaining to a better condition of existence hereafter. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Smritis, the Epics, and the Puranas, never question the soul's surviving the body, and concern themselves with only showing how it lives, either in heaven or in hell, till its Karma, which has commenced to bear fruit, is exhausted, or re-incarnates upon earth, till its Karma and the seed of desire are consumed by knowledge. The effect of these teachings upon the lives and characters of the Hindus has, like that of their belief in the law of Karma, been to reconcile them to the troubles of life, to meet hardship with a resignation seldom found among other nations, and to inflict upon themselves much voluntary suffering, as well as to make many a sacrifice on the assurance that present trouble is sure to result in permanent future good. All sacrifices, charities, fasts, penances and pilgrimages, for which the people of this

country are famous, are most cheerfully undergone in the belief that no good action is ever lost. All ceremonies in honour of the departed, as well as all gifts that are made at such ceremonies, are made or performed under the conviction that whatever is given in this world, shall most assuredly reach in the next the person for whom it is given. Modern as well as ancient literature of India is full of these sentiments, and those who regard their present life upon earth as the *summum bonum*, are everywhere denounced as fools or idiots, or as the slayers of their own souls. A brief account of the teachings of the Sastras as well as modern beliefs in these respects will therefore be of some interest to the reader.

Future life according to (*a*) the Vedas.

Say the Veda:—"As the cucumber is released from its stem, so may I be released from death and be not deprived of immortality." (Rig Veda, VII 59, 12.) The heaven of the Rishis of the Vedic period was, however, not, as has been supposed, some region in or beyond the Himalayas, but the "well-beloved, mansion of Vishnu, where men, devoted to the gods, are happy." (Rig Veda I, 14, 154-5.) They believed in the transmigration of souls, for we read in a hymn to Agni: "Do not burn him nor consume him, Agni. Let not his body or skin be scattered, O Jatvedas. When thou hast matured him, then send him on his way unto the fathers. When thou hast made him ready, then do thou give him unto the fathers. When he attains the life that awaits him, he shall become a controller of the deities. Let the sun receive thy eye, and the wind thy spirit; go as thy merit is to earth or to heaven. Go, if such be thy lot, unto the water; go, make thy home in plants with all the members of thy body. Thy portion (the soul) is unborn, let it be kindled by *tapas* (thought); let it be kindled by thy glowing splendour. With thy auspicious forms, O Jatvedas, bear him to the regions of the good. O Agni, send him back to the fathers, him who goes to thee as sacrifice with our oblations. Wearing new life, let him increase his offspring; let him rejoin a body, O Jatvedas." (Rig Veda, Book X, 80.)

(*b*) The Unpanishads.

In the Isavásyopanishad, the worshipper prays at the time of death: "My Prana (vital air) is immortal, then let this body be consumed to ashes. O my mind, remember, remember thy acts; O my mind, remember thy acts. Guide us, O Agni, by the road of bliss, for the enjoyment of the fruit of our actions, thou who know-

est all our actions. Destroy our crooked sins, that we may offer thee our best salutations." (Isavásyopanishad, verses 17 & 18.) In the Upanishads the immortality of the individual self (Jiva), its passage in and out of the body, the various stages through which it passes after death, and the various heavens and hells it inhabits, are described at greater length than in the Sanhita portion. In the Kathopanishad Nachiketas asks Yama to instruct him into the *atma vidayá* saying, " Some say the soul exists after death, others say it does not exist. This I like to know instructed by thee." And Yama, after declaring how even the gods had failed to solve the mystery of life, tells Nachiketas, "that the soul is immortal, all-pervading, the ruler of the past, present and the future, here, there, everywhere," and continues : " When the soul which dwells in the body departs and becomes separated from it, what else is left there? This is that. No mortal whatsoever lives by *Prana*, the vital air which goes forward, or by the *Apana*, the vital air which goes downwards, nor by any of the senses. They live by something else in which both are founded. Now I shall declare to thee that immortal secret Brahm, also what the soul becomes after death. Some enter the womb again after death to assume a body, others become inanimate objects, according to their work, according to their knowledge." (Kathopanishad, V-4, 5, 6 and 7.) In another place, it is said : " Now as a heavy-laden cart moves along groaning, thus does this corporeal self, mounted by the intelligent self, move along groaning when a man is thus going to expire. And when the body grows weak through old age, or through illness, then the Purusha, after separating himself from his members as an amra (mango), an udumbara (fig), or a pippala fruit, is separated from its stalk, hastens back as he came to the place, from which he started to new life. And as policemen, magistrates, equerries and governors wait for a king who is coming back, with food and drink, saying, 'He comes back, he approaches,' thus do all the elements wait on him who knows this, saying: 'That Brahman comes, that Brahman approaches.' And as policemen, magistrates, equerries and governors gather round a king who is departing, thus do all the senses (pranas) gather round the self, at the time of death, when man is thus going to expire. Now when that self, having sunk into weakness, sinks, as it were, into unconsciousness, then gather those senses (pranas) around him, and he taking with him those

elements of light, descends into the heart. When that person in the eye turns away, then he ceases to know any form. 'He has become one,' they say, 'he does not see.' 'He has become one,' they say, 'he does not smell.' 'He has become one,' they say, 'he does not taste.' 'He has become one,' they say, he does not speak.' 'He has become one,' they say, 'he does not hear.' 'He has become one," they say, 'he does not think.' 'He has become one,' they say, 'he does not touch.' 'He has become one,' they say, 'he does not know.'" The point of his heart becomes lighted up, and by that light the self departs, either through the eye, or through the skull, or through other places of the body. And when he thus departs, the chief prana (life) departs after him, and when life thus departs, all the other vital spirits (pranas) depart after it. He is conscious, and being conscious he follows and departs. Then both his knowledge and his work take hold of him, as well as his memory of the past. And as a caterpillar after leaving the end of a blade of grass, and after having made another approach to another blade, draws itself together towards it, thus does this self, after having thrown off this body, and dispelled all ignorance, and after making another approach to another body, draws himself together towards it. And as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, turns it into another newer and more beautiful shape, so does the self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, make unto himself another newer and more beautiful shape, whether it be like the fathers, or like the Gandharvas, or like Prajapati, or like Brahman, or like any other being. That self is indeed Brahman, consisting of knowledge, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, waters, wind, ether, light and no light, desire and no desire, anger and no anger, right and wrong, and all things. Now as a man is like this or like that, according as he acts, and according as he behaves, so will he be:—"A man of good acts will become good, a man of bad acts, bad. He becomes pure by pure deeds, bad by bad deeds. And here they say that man is made up of desires. And as is his desire, so is his will; as is his will, so is his deed; and whatever deed he does, that will he reap. And here there is a verse:— 'To whatever object a man's mind is attached, to that he goes together with his deed; and having obtained the end (the last result) of whatever he does here on earth, he returns again from that

world (which is a temporary reward of his deed) to this world of action.'" (Brihad Áranyaka Upanishad, IV—III—35 to 38, and IV—1-6.)

The passage of the soul after death.

The Upanishads lay down three roads by which the soul travels after death: (1) the path of the gods (the Devayána) for the ascetic and the wise; (2) the path of the fathers (the Pitriyána) for the good and the charitable householder, and the path of repeated birth and death (Jayaseva Mriyaseva) for those who are neither. "They who know this fivefold fire, and who live in the forest and are devoted to a life of faith and austerity, proceed to light, from light to day, from the day to the light fortnight, from the light fortnight to the months in which the sun is in the northern solstice, from the months to the year, from the year to the sun, from the sun to the moon, from the moon to the lightning, from the lightning a super-human being takes them to Brahman." This is the path of the gods. Those, on the other hand, who live in villages, and are devoted to making sacrificial gifts at the altar and erecting works of public utility, proceed to smoke, from smoke to night, from night to the waning moon, from the waning moon to the six months when the sun is in the southern solstice, thence to the year, thence to the regions of the fathers, thence to the ether, thence to the moon. This moon is the king. Here they are loved by the gods. Yes, the gods love them. Having lived there till the merit of their good works is exhausted, they return by the same path, from the moon to the ether, from the ether to the air. Having become the air, he becomes smoke, from smoke vapour, from vapour cloud, then rains, and is produced as rice and corn, herbs and trees, sesamum and beans, and thence it is most difficult to get out, for whosoever may be the persons who eat the food and beget offspring, he henceforth becomes like unto them. Those whose conduct has been good, will attain to a good birth, either that of a Brahman or a Kshatriya or a Vaishya. Those whose conduct has been bad will quickly attain to an evil birth, either that of a dog or a hog or a Chandala. By neither of these two ways these small creatures are continually going and returning, of whom it may be said, 'Live and die,' this is the third place. Therefore that world, the heaven, never becomes full. Hence, let a man take care of himself. Upon this

there is the verse: "The person who steals gold, who drinks wine, who occupies his preceptor's bed, who kills a Bráhmana, all these four fall, and as a fifth, the person who associates with them." (Chandogya Upanishad, V—IX, 1 to 9.)

The Kaushatiki Upanishad declares the moon to be the door of the heavenly world. If one is not satisfied with life there, he is sent on to higher regions, otherwise he is sent back to reincarnate on earth. If on such return he meets a sage who imparts to him knowledge whereby he fears heaven as much as hell, then after death he goes by the path of the gods to the world of Agni (fire), thence to that of Vayu (air), thence to that of Varuna, thence to that of Indra, thence to that of Prajapati, and thence to that of Hiranyagarbha. There he meets the lake Ará, the river Vijara, the tree Ilya from which *soma* always flows, the city Salugya, the place Aparajita, the door-keepers Indra and Prajapati, the hall of Brahma built by (Vibhu), the throne of Vichakshana, the couch of endless splendour, the beloved Manasi, the Apsaras, the Srutis, the Ambháyanis (budhi) and the river Ambáyas leading to a knowledge of Brahma. There Apsaras, with heavenly garlands, perfumes, and fruits, meet and adorn him, and he moves towards Brahman, freed from good and evil deeds. He tells Brahman, "I am like a season and the child of seasons sprung from the womb of endless space, from the light. The light which is the origin of the year, the past, and the present, which is all living things and all elements, is the self. Thou art the self, what thou art, that am I." (Kaushatiki Upanishad, I.—1 to 6.)

The explanation of the allegory can be gathered from the Upanishad itself. If the dying man feels satisfied with the transcient felicity of heaven, he has to return to the world after the fruit of his works has been partially exhausted, otherwise he gradually attains to final emancipation. The lake Ará represents man's desires and passions which intercept his way to emancipation. If he is successful in crossing these and conquers time (moments—istihah), which also bars his passage, he is met with the further temptation in the shape of attachment to life, which is the river Vijara, the river of perpetual youth. The power of his devotion, moreover, brings him face to face with the temptation of having his life greatly prolonged, but if he is wise he withstands it also.

The Ilya tree from which *soma* flows, and the city of Salugya with its splendours, typify enjoyments of heavenly felicity; the hall of Vibhu, which is nothing more than his own *ahankára* (egotism), is the chain which binds him even there. The throne of Vichakshana, the mind, the couch of the all-powerful Prana in which the soul resides, the Banasi, the beloved intellect, and Chakshushi, the eye which is weaving the world, the Vedas which lead to the Sansara, with its fairy-like attractions, all bar his passage to Brahman. But if he wisely gets over them and perseveres in his devotion, he attains to Brahman. The Apsaras with their many articles of enjoyments which typify the fruit of devotion in the shape of further heavenly enjoyments, have also to be withstood before he can shake off his good and evil deeds, and become identified with Brahman. If he is able to accomplish all this, then he is one with Brahman, which is past, present and future, the true, transcending the senses and the vital airs, and is thenceforth free (mukta).

The knower of Brahman does not re-incarnate except in certain cases.

In going from one body to another, the soul is, according to the Upanishads, accompanied with its Sukshma Sarira (the subtle body). But such going and coming are for the person whose desires have not been extinguished. For one whose desires have been extinguished there is no going and coming. "But the vital airs of him who has no desire, who does not desire, who is beyond desire, whose desires have been satisfied, and whose desire is the soul itself, do not depart the body. Being even Brahman, he obtains Brahman." (Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Chapter 4, Brahmana 4, verse 6.) Such a person is not troubled by the thought of either good or evil. He has conquered both, neither good nor evil touches him. No specific cognition remains for him, for he has become the soul of all. There is thenceforward no duality for him. "As rivers flowing into the sea, lose their name and form when they reach the sea, so, liberated from name and form, proceeds the sage to the divine Purusha who is greater than the great. Then the fifteen parts of his body enter their respective elements, and all the organs merge into their presiding deities, the actions and the individual soul made up of knowledge, become one in the Being which is beyond all, the Imperishable." (Munudakopanishad, III-

1-7 and 8.) No remainder of works is left in the case of such a person. The name and the form as well as the parts (Kalá) of which he was composed are broken, and people speak of Him as the *Person* (*Purusha*) only. He becomes without parts, immortal. For those to whom a certain office is, however, assigned in the order of things, there is subsistence of the body no long as the office lasts. "For gradually exhausting the aggregate of works the consequences of which have once begun, so as to enable them to discharge their offices, passing according to their free will from one body into another, as if from one house into another, in order to accomplish the duties of their offices, preserving all the time the memory of their identity, they create for themselves, through their power over the material of the body and the sense organs, new bodies, and occupy them either all at once or in succession. Nor can it be said that when passing into new bodies, they remember only the fact of their former existence not their individuality; for it is known that they preserve the sense of their individuality also." (Vedanta Sutras III—III—32.)

The Smritis.

There is no description of hell in the Upanishads, except that the souls of the bad and the sinful reincarnate in lower orders of creation, even as hogs or dogs. It is the Smritis, the Itihasas and the Puranas which describe heaven and hell in materialized forms and detail the various orders of being through which the soul passes after death.

Says Manu: "All acts are done by the mind, the speech and the body, and their results, good or bad, are sure to follow. According to his acts, man attains to three states—the high, the middle, and the low. He meets the result of actions committed by the mind, by the mind, of those committed by the body, by the body, and of those committed by the speech, by the speech. By transgressions committed by the body he attains to the condition of inanimate creatures, by those committed by the speech to that of birds and quadrupeds, and by those committed by the mind to the status of a Chandala. I shall briefly declare in due order what transmigrations in the whole world a man obtains through each of the three qualities. These qualities have been defined before, as darkness, activity and goodness. The wise consider acts of darkness to be those of which one feels ashamed, both when doing them and thereafter. Acts of activity are those by which a man hopes to gain profit or fame

in the world, but of which he does not feel ashamed, nor which, if unaccomplished, cause any remorse. Acts of goodness are those which engender a desire of knowledge, which cause no sense of shame, and whose performance affords satisfaction to the soul. Those endowed with goodness reach the state of gods, those endowed with activity the state of men, and those endowed with darkness sink to the condition of beasts; this is the threefold course of transmigration.

But know this threefold course of transmigration that depends on the three qualities to be again threefold, low, middling, and high, according to the particular nature of the act and of the knowledge of each person. Immovable beings, insects, both small and large, fishes, snakes, tortoises, cattle, and wild animals are the lowest condition to which the quality of darkness leads. Elephants, horses, Sudras, and despicable barbarians, lions, tigers, and boars are the middling states caused by the quality of darkness. Charanas (wandering minstrels), Suparnas (bird deities), hypocrites, Rákshasas and Pisachas (goblins) belong to the highest rank of conditions among those produced by darkness. Ghallas, Mallas, Natas, men who subsist by despicable occupations, and those addicted to gambling and drinking, form the lowest order of conditions caused by activity. Kings and Kshatriyas, domestic priests of kings, those who delight in the warfare of disputants, constitute the middling rank of the state—caused by activity. Gandharvas, Guhyakas, and servants of the gods, Apsaras belong to the highest rank of conditions produced by activity.

Hermits, ascetics, Bráhmanas, the crowds of the Vaimánika deities, spirits moving in mid-air on their Vimánas (chariots), the gods of the lunar mansions, and the Daityas form the first and lowest rank of the existences caused by goodness. Sacrifice, sages, gods, the vedas, the heavenly lights, the years, the manes, and the Sádhyas constitute the second order of existences caused by goodness. The sages declare Brahma, the Creator of the Universe, the True, the Great, and the Undiscernible to constitute the highest order of things produced by goodness.

Thus the result of the threefold action, the whole system of transmigrations which consists of three classes, each with three subdivisions, and which includes all created things, has been explained. (Chapter XII.)

(d) The Epics. The Epics follow the Smritis and the Upanishads in their teachings about the immortality of the soul and its assuming various bodies according to its Karma. "It is the immemorial tradition that the soul is eternal and everlasting, but the corporeal frame of all creatures is subject to destruction here below. When therefore life is extinguished, the body only is destroyed, but the spirit, bound by its actions, travels elsewhere. The spirit does not die; there is only a change of habitation. They are mistaken who foolishly say that creatures die. The spirit only betakes itself to another body, and this change of habitation is called death." (Mahábhárata Vana Parva, Chapter 187, verses 13, 24 and 26.)

It is its accumulated load of Karma that determines the future incarnations of the ego. If its actions have been good, it attains to the status of the gods. By a combination of good and evil actions, it attains to the status of man. By evil actions alone it re-incarnates in lower creatures. In this way it passes through thousands of births and wanders about in various regions fettered by its Karma. Suffering diverse kinds of misery on account of its Karma in the past, it engages in new actions in order to ward off such misery, but only to increase the load and suffer further trouble like a sick man partaking of unwholesome food But though unhappy, it does not think itself to be so, nor does it make effort to break off its bonds. On the contrary, in each new incarnation, it makes them harder and revolves upon the wheel of the Sansara addicted to vice and never reaches the end of its misfortunes. If, however, it succeeds in purifying its actions and washes off its sins by the practice of virtue, it attains to heaven and is born in higher orders of creation. (Mahábhárata Vana Parva, Chapter 209, abstracted) The days, the nights, the sun and the moon, the regions of the earth, water, fire, air and space are all witnesses to its actions. Accompanied with its subtle body, it goes to the regions of Yama (king of death), where it enjoys the felicity of heaven or suffers the tortures of hell, according to its Karma.

The rishis did not, however, look upon heaven itself as a place of unalloyed bliss, and many a sage refused to go there, dreading future fall. Says a messenger of the gods to Rishi Mudgala: "O great sage, thou art of simple understanding, since having

secured that celestial bliss which brings great honour, thou art still deliberating like an unwise person. O Muni, that region which is known as heaven, is there above us. Those regions tower high, and are furnished with excellent paths, and are, O sage, always ranged by celestial cars. Atheists and untruthful persons, those who have not practised austerities and those that have not performed great sacrifices, cannot go there. Only men of virtuous souls and subdued spirits, those who have their senses and understandings under control, are free from malice and are devoted to the practice of charity, or those who are heroes, and men bearing marks of battle, who have, with subdued senses and faculties, performed the most meritorious actions, attain those regions. O Bráhmana, these regions are capable of being attained to only by virtuous acts, and are inhabited only by pious men. There, O Maudgalya, are established separately myriads of beautiful, shining and resplendent worlds, full of every desirable object, owned by those celestial beings,—the gods, the Sadhyas, the Viswas, the great sages, the Yamas, the Dhamas, the Gandharvas and the Apsaras. And there is that Monarch of Mountains, the golden Meru—extending over a space of thirty-three thousand Yojanas. And there, O Maudgalya, are the sacred gardens of the celestials, with Nandana at their head, for the sport of persons of meritorious acts. And neither hunger nor thirst, nor lassitude nor fear, nor anything that is disgusting or inauspicious is there. And all the odours of that place are delightful and all the breezes delicious. And all the sounds there are captivating, O sage, to the ear and the heart. And neither grief nor decrepitude, nor labour nor repentance is there. That world, O Muni, which is obtained by one's own acts, is of this nature. Persons repair to it by virtue of their meritorious deeds. And the persons of those who dwell there look resplendent, O Maudgalya, solely by virtue of their own acts, not from the merits of their fathers or mothers. And there is neither sweat, nor stench, nor excreta, nor urine. And their excellent garlands of divine fragrance never fade. And, O Bráhmana, they ride on cars like the one I have brought. And, O mighty sage, devoid of every grief, fatigue and ignorance, and malice, men who have attained heaven, dwell in those regions happily. And, O bull among Munis, higher and higher over such regions, there are others endowed with even

higher celestial virtues. Of these, the beautiful and resplendent regions of Brahmá are the foremost. Thither, O Bráhmana, repair Rishis who have been sanctified by meritorious acts. And there dwell certain beings named Ribhus, who are the gods of the gods themselves. Their regions are supremely blessed, and are adored even by the deities. They shine by their own light, and bestow every object of desire They suffer no pangs of love for women, nor possess worldly wealth, and are free from guile. The Ribhus do not subsist on oblations, nor even on ambrosia. And they are endued with such celestial forms that they are not perceivable by the senses. And these eternal gods of the celestials do not desire happiness for happiness' sake, nor do they change at the revolution of a kalpa. Where, indeed, is there decrepitude or dissolution, when for them there is neither ecstacy, nor joy, nor happiness? They have neither happiness nor misery, why should they then have anger or aversion, O Muni? O Maudgalya, their supreme state is coveted even by the gods. And that crowning emancipation hard to attain, can never be acquired by people subject to desire. The number of those deities is thirty-three. To their regions repair wise men, after having observed excellent vows, or bestowed gifts according to the ordinance of the Vedas. Thou also hast easily acquired that success by thy charities. Thy effulgence is displayed by the virtue of thy austerities, do thou also enjoy that condition obtained by thy meritorious acts. Such, O Bráhmana, is the bliss of heaven containing various worlds! Thus have I described unto thee the blessings of the celestial regions. Do thou now also hear from me some of the disadvantages thereof. In the celestial regions a person, while enjoying the fruit of the acts he has already performed, cannot engage in any others, and he must enjoy the consequences of his former acts till they are completely exhausted. After that he is subject to fall. This, in my opinion, forms the chief disadvantage of heaven. The fall of a person who has been immersed in pleasure must, O Maudgalya, be pronounced to be a great drawback of heaven. And the discontent and regret which follow one's stay in an inferior station, after he has enjoyed more auspicious and brighter regions, must be hard to bear! Those about to fall are, moreover, stupified, and agitated by emotions. And when their garlands fade, fear invades their hearts. These mighty drawbacks, O Maudgalya, extend even to the regions

of Brahmá himself. In the celestial regions, the virtues of men who have performed righteous acts, are countless. And, O Muni, there is, however, this consolation for the fallen that, by reason of their merits, they take birth among men and attain to high positions and pass a life of happiness. If, however, one cannot acquire knowledge here, he goes to an inferior birth. The fruits of acts done in this world are reaped in the next. This world, O Bráhmana, has been declared to be one of acts ; the other, as one of the enjoyment of their fruit." (Mahábhárata Vana Parva 260, verses 1 to 35.)

"The Hell of the Mahábhárata is a place in the nether regions enveloped in thick darkness, and covered with hair and moss as its grassy vesture. Polluted with the stench of sinners, and with mire of flesh and blood, it abounds with gadflies and stinging bees and gnats, and is endangered by the inroads of grisly bears. Rotting corpses lie here and there. Overspread with bones and hair, it is full of worms and insects. It is skirted all along with a blazing fire, and is infested with crows and other birds and vultures, all having beaks of iron, as well as with evil spirits with long mouths pointed like needles. And it abounds with inaccessible fastnesses like the Vindhya Mountains. Human corpses lie scattered over it, besmeared with fat and blood, with arms and thighs cut off, or with entrails torn out and legs severed. Along that path so full of the stench of corpses and other dangers, is a river full of boiling water, and therefore difficult to cross, and a forest of trees whose leaves are like sharp swords and razors. There are plains full of fine white sand burning hot, and rocks and stones made of iron, and many jars of iron all around, with boiling oil in them. Many a Kuta-câmalika is there, with sharp thorns, and therefore exceedingly painful to the touch." (Mahábhárata Swargarohnika Parva, Section II.)

The path of the gods the Uttarayána (the northern), and that of the Fathers the Dakshinayána (the southern), are the same as in the Upanishads. Says the Gitá : "Fire, light, day, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern solstice, departing at these, the knowers of Brahman reach Brahman. Smoke, night, the dark fortnight, the six months of the southern solstice, going by these to the lunar light, the Yogi returns. The bright and dark paths of the world are verily eternal, going by one of them, one has not to return, going by the other he has to return." (VIII—24-26.) The

light, etc., are explained by the commentators to be the deities presiding over each of these elements, and the northern path as the path of worshippers of Brahman with attributes, and the southern of those who perform sacrifices to gods and other works of public utility.

All the heroes and sages of the Epic period sought to die when the sun was in the northern solstice, and Bhishma, the Kaurava leader, did not relinquish the body for 58 days till it was *Uttarayana.* He remained lying on his bed of arrows, and when the time came, restrained his vital airs in the manner prescribed by the Yoga Sastra. His breaths pierced through the crown of the head and escaped, shooting like a meteor through the sky. (Mahábhárata Anusasana Parva, Chapter 169.) Suka, the son of Vyása, also gave up his body in the same manner. Desirous of attaining to that condition of existence whence there is no return, he resolved to have recourse to Yoga, and after casting off his body, to enter through the Sun, the ever-effulgent Brahman. Said he: "When the spirit enters that effulgent Brahman, it no longer suffers like Soma waxing and waning, nor returns to the earth to again mount up to heaven. The Sun warms all the world by his piercing rays. His disc never undergoes any diminution. Remaining unchanged, he drinks the energy of all creatures. There I shall live in my invincible inner soul, freed from all fear, having cast off this body in the solar region." He betook himself to Yoga and first cast off all that was of Rajas and Tamas (passion and delusion) in him, and then all that was of goodness (Satva) in him, and then restrained his life breaths till he became the soul of all things. His spirit then travelled through the air, and when Vyása, his father, called out to him, the only answer he could receive was an echo from the hills. (Santi Parva, Chapters 334 and 335.) Krishna likewise gave up his body by the same process. When the hour for his departure had come, he restrained all his life breaths and betook himself to high Yoga. A fierce hunter of the name of Jára happening to pass in search of deer, and mistaking Kesava, who was stretched on the earth in Yoga, for one, pierced him on the heel with a shaft and quickly came to that spot for capturing his prey. Jará, however, found a man dressed in yellow robes, rapt in Yoga, and endued with many arms. Regarding himself an offender, and filled with fear, he touched the feet of Kesava. But

Krishna comforted him and then ascended upwards, filling the entire welkin with splendour. "When he reached heaven, Vásavas, the twin Acwins, the Rudras, the Adityas, the Vasus and the Viswedevas, the Munis, the Siddhas, and many of the foremost Gandharvas, with the Apsaras, advanced to receive him. The illustrious Narayana of fierce energy, the Creator and Destroyer of all,—that preceptor of Yoga—filling Heaven with his splendour, reached his own inconceivable region, and met the deities and (celestial) Rishis and Charanas, and the foremost ones among the Gandharvas, as well as many beautiful Apsaras, Siddhas and Saddhyas. All of them, bending in humility, worshipped him. The deities all saluted him, and many foremost Munis and Rishis worshipped him as the Lord of all. The Gandharvas waited upon him, singing his praises, and Indra also joyfully praised him." (Mahábhárata Mausala Parva, Section IV.)

Felicity in the next world, was, however, always more desirable to the Rishis than felicity in this world, and therefore death was to them an ever-present reality. Says Vyása to his son Suka : "The company of all objects in the world is short-lived. Thy body is unstable like a bubble on the surface of water. Thy foes are always on the alert, ready to spring at any moment. Thy days are running fast and the period of thy life is running short. Death is seeking thee at every turn and like a she-wolf watching a lamb ready to pounce upon it, it is ready to pounce upon thee, whilst thou art engaged in the pleasures of the world. Alas ! thou art blind to that which death brings in its train—decrepitude and old age. Why tarriest thou ? Go along the path of emancipation. Very soon wilt thou be taken to the dread presence of the king of the dead all alone. The points of the compass will very soon begin to whirl before thy eyes. The Universal destroyer, with diseases for his charioteers, will soon overtake thee and pierce thy body with his shafts. Very soon will thy sight be enveloped in darkness and wilt thou behold golden trees on the top of the hill (all signs of approaching death). Do thou, therefore, hasten to achieve thy highest good through acts of righteousness. Do thou earn that wealth which has no fear of kings or thieves and which one has not to abandon at death. That wealth has not to be divided among co-owners. Each enjoys it in the other world to the extent he has earned it in this.

" Do thou set thyself to the acquisition of that wealth which is indestructible and durable. Do not think that thou shouldst first enjoy all kinds of pleasures and then turn thy hearts on Emancipation, for, before thou art satiated with enjoyment, thou mayest be overtaken by Death. Do thou, in view of this, hasten to do acts of goodness. Neither mother, nor son, nor relatives, nor dear friends, even when solicited with honors, accompany the man that dies. To the region of Yama one has to go alone and unaccompanied by any one. Only those deeds, good and bad, that one did before death accompany him to the other world. The gold and gems that one has earned by good and bad means do not become productive of any benefit to one when his body meets with dissolution. Of men that have gone to the other world, there is no witness, better than the soul, for all acts done and undone in life.

" When it is thy duty to go alone to that world, thyself in front, thyself in the rear, what need hast thou of the body, wife, children, or wealth ? Where have all thy grandsires gone ? Death does not wait for any one to see if he has done or not done this or that. Mother and spouses and sires have we had by hundreds of thousands through various incarnations, whose are they, whose are we ? Man commits various acts for the sake of wife and children, but he alone enjoys the consequences thereof. I am quite alone, none is mine, nor I am his. I see no one who is mine or whose am I. Time is cooking all creatures into its cauldron with the aid of the ladle, constituted of months and seasons, by the fuel of days and nights with the sun for his fire. Do thou therefore seek righteousness (dharma) and direct thy steps towards heaven." (Moksha Dharma, Chapter 322, abstracted.)

The question whether the soul when migrating to the next world, retains recollection of its earthly connections, is answered by saying that it does so in a large degree, and the Mahábhárata illustrates it by the parable of Vyása bringing the heroes who had fallen on the field of Kurukshetra to life, to meet their kinsmen on earth. The Rishi bathed in the Ganges and summoned all the heroes who had been killed in battle. Headed by Bhishma and Drona, the dead, numbering many thousands, emerged from the waters of the sacred stream, each wearing the dress he wore on the battle-field and carrying the standard he carried there. " They wore celestial garments, were free from anger, animosity, pride and

jealousy. Son met father and mother, wife husband, brother brothers, with most happy hearts and cheerful countenance. It looked like a high carnival of happy men and women. This wonderful phenomenon looked like a picture painted on canvas. After passing the night with their relations and friends on earth, the dead disappeared into the waters of the river and re-ascended to heaven." (Asramavasika Parva, Chapters 12 and 13.)

(f) The heaven and hell of the Puranas.

"The Puranic accounts of the passage of the soul, and the regions through which it passes, and the births it has to undergo, are even more elaborate than those of the Epics. According to the Vishnu Purana, above the earth are the spheres of Bhuvah, Swah, Maha, Jana, Tapas, and Satya. Of these the last three are permanent, the others are perishable. The path of the gods is to the north of the solar sphere of Nagavithi and to the south of the Seven Rishis. There Siddhas of subdued senses reside till the end of a kalpa (cycle). The region of Vishnu is between the Dhruva (Polar Star) and the Seven Rishis, and there dwell those whose sins have been thoroughly purified and who are above virtue and vice. The Supreme Vishnu is only real, everything else is unreal. There is nothing which is without beginning or end, or which can be called real, except Vishnu. He who knows Him to be eternal, immutable, unchanging, and strives to attain to Him, escapes the Sansara. The highest wisdom consists in knowing Him to be the soul of all. There is no cessation of misery even in heaven. The attainment of the Divine Being is considered by the wise to be the only remedy for the three kinds of evils which beset mankind.

"In hell men are bound, by the servants of the king of death, with chords and beaten with sticks, and have to encounter the fierce aspect of Yama and horrors of a terrible route. In the different hells there are various intolerable tortures with burning sand, fire, machines, and weapons. Some are severed with saws, some roasted in forges, some are chopped with axes, some buried in the ground, some are mounted on stakes, some cast to wild beasts to be devoured, some are gnawed by vultures, some torn by tigers, some are boiled in oil, some rolled in caustic slime, some are precipitated from great heights, some

are tossed upwards by engines. The number of punishments inflicted in hell, which are the consequences of sins, is infinite." (Vishnu Purana, Section V, Chapter V, verses 44 to 49.)

After enjoying the felicities of heaven or undergoing the sufferings of hell, the spirit reincarnates upon earth in various orders of inanimate beings, aquatic animals, birds, quadrupeds, men, rishis, gods and liberated spirits. Each of these stages is superior to the one preceding it, and the spirit has to pass through each of them till it attains emancipation. Severe penalties are meted out for greater, and lighter ones for lighter, transgressions. The practice of righteousness and devotion to Vishnu, however, purify the most hardened sinner. By meditating upon Vishnu, he is released from all worldly afflictions. "What is the use," says the Vishnu Purana, "of going to heaven whence one has to come back to earth, and how different is devotion to Hari, which leads to final emancipation! The person who meditates day and night upon Vishnu is released from all sins, and does not go to hell after death. What gives delight to the mind is heaven, what gives pain is hell. Therefore vice is hell, and virtue is heaven." (Vishnu Purana, Book II, Section VI.) And it declares that the king of death forbids his messengers from bringing to him those who are devoted to Vishnu, for he is the lord of all but not of Vishnu. The story of Ajamila, a Brahman, who had taken to evil ways, is generally cited to show how even casual remembrance of Vishnu at the hour of death frees one from the tortures of hell. It is, however, more a story of the conversion of a hardened sinner through latent good than Karma of a casual remembrance.

The account of life after death, as given in the Garuda Purana, is, however, more implicitly believed in by all modern Hindus. In the darkest colours it describes the passage of the soul of the sinful after death. When about to die man obtains superhuman vision and sees all as one. His vital air then leaves his body and the messengers of the king of death draw the Purusha (soul), who is of the size of a thumb, out of the body. Of terrific appearance, armed with nooses and clubs, they drag him along the road to the regions of Yama, uttering dire threats of the terrible hells in store for him. After suffering the pangs of hunger and thirst, troubled by ferocious beasts, beaten by his

captors, and exposed to many other dangers on the road, now reeling towards a pit, now rising, the poor soul is taken in two or three *Muhurtas* in the presence of the king of death. After having a sight of the king of terrors, he is brought back to earth to have a body according to his *vásná* (desire). Hungry and thirsty, he eats the cakes and drinks the water offered to him by his descendants, but is not satisfied. A body is then formed for him in ten days from portions of the funeral cakes offered to him, and after living on the cakes offered on the 11th and the 12th days of his funeral, he is again taken by the messengers of Yama to the presence of the king by a road 6,000 Yojanas in length, full of the greatest dangers, with nothing to take shelter in, exposed to the severest heat and cold and infested by wild beasts. There, remembering his past deeds, the miserable soul looks round for a protector, but finds none, and grieves for having acted sinfully. On the various stages of the road he has to subsist upon the monthly cakes offered to him by his descendants, and after six months, comes to a river with a boat, and unless he has some good deeds to show, is not allowed to cross, but is thrown into the river and dragged out like a fish and carried to the city of the king of death, which he reaches in one year. That city has four gates, three for the good, the charitable, the wise and the brave in life, and one (the southern) for the sinful. The king of death sits in his court surrounded by the rishis, the sages, the wise, and the good. Untruth, injustice or sin is not there. All is truth and justice. The king's minister, Chitragupta, has a separate court where he and his assistants keep exact account of all that man does in life, in thought, word and deed. The account is now read and the sinful soul is condemned to suffer the direst calamities of hell till the end of a kalpa, when it reincarnates upon earth, and after passing through various orders of being, animate and inanimate, is ultimately born as man. In the mother's womb it prays to God for release from its fleshy prison, vowing to serve Him alone in life, but deluded by the vanities of the world, it soon forgets its vow and is immersed into the Sansara and dies, and undergoes the same round of misery and birth. The good and the pious do not, however, meet so painful an end. They are carried to the court of the king of death in resplendent cars, are accommodated there in their proper places, and after enjoying all the felicities of heaven, reincarnate

upon earth in good and pious families. A human incarnation is most difficult to attain, and if even, on attaining to it, man does not strive to know God, he is lost for ever. The wise, concludes the Garuda, keep the body for the sake of practising dharma. They practise dharma for the sake of knowing their átmá, and they know their átmá for the sake of engaging in meditation upon Vishnu, whereby they are released from the trammels of birth and death.

All these are also more or less the notions of modern Hindu writers on the subject of life after death.

Modern Ideas. "When, by the command of the king of death, his messengers shall bind and carry thee away, then neither father nor mother, nor master nor friend, nor son shall share thy misfortune. When tortured by them, thou shalt call out for help, none but Rama shall be thy helper. When thou shalt visit hell and meet a river full of fearful creatures and terrific eddies, unfathomable in depth, with its invisible banks, with no boat to take thee across, then father, mother or friend will there be none to lend thee his arm, and the long arm of Rama, the unselfish friend of all, shall, O Tulsi, be thy only support." "Where the distance of the road cannot be counted, there the name of Hari shall be the only provision of thy journey. When walking in darkness, the name of Hari only shall light thy footsteps. When thou shalt have no companion, Hari shall be thy only companion. When thou shalt be scorched by fierce heat from above, the name of Hari shall only afford thee shade. When thou shalt be dying of burning thirst, the name of Hari shall, O Nanak, be thy only nectar to drink."

The sinful and the wicked, according to popular belief, have to pass through as many as 8,400,000 of births, and great is the dread of incarnating in lower orders of creations. Incarnation is determined by what a man is intensely attached to at the time of his death. But he who is intensely attached to God, and meditates upon Him at the time of death, is released from all transmigratory existence. Therefore they say 'antá matá so malá' (the last thought is the thought), and make the dying repeat in his hearing, 'Ráma, Rama.' Says Kabir, "When burnt, the body is left as a heap of ashes; if left lying, it is infested by worms like an unbaked pitcher, which dissolves in

water, is this frail body, why art thou running mad? Hast thou forgotten the time when thou layest in thy mother's womb, for ten months, head downwards? Like the bee collecting honey, thou hast collected wealth; but when thou shalt die, every one shall be saying, 'Take him away, take him away.' Thy beloved wife shall only accompany thee up to the door of the house, and thy friends and relations up to the crematorium and thenceforward thy spirit shall have to journey along alone. Says Kabir, hear, O man, thou shalt fall into a deep pit, thy life-breath gone. Thou hast imprisoned thyself in this unreal Máyá like a bird in a pond of lotus flowers." "None is ever born, none ever dies. This body is unreal, but Rama (the spirit within) is true. All worldly wealth is unreal like a dream, why art thou beguiled? Nothing shall go with thee, why art thou attached to it? Give up praise and blame, remember God, says Nanak. God pervades all." This is the popular belief on the subject.

The teachings of the Sastras, ancient and modern, on the subject of funeral gifts, are more or less implicitly followed in modern times, and with the advance of civilization and importation of articles of luxury, many costly additions have been made to things to be given away at funerals. A complete outfit of every article of dress, food, and household furniture is therefore considered to be necessary for the comfort of the spirit in the next world. Gifts of water to drink, lamps, sandals, umbrellas, Kapila cows, secure the favour of Chitragupta, the custodian of the records of karma. Liberality of disposition, honouring the Brahmans, charity towards the distressed, erection of houses for public accommodation, digging wells and providing places for free distribution of water to the thirsty traveller, excavating tanks and making free gifts to all who come to them, are applauded as leading to heaven where the good and pious, reside till their merit is exhausted, when they incarnate in human bodies in the family of the good, the pious and the well-to-do. The miser and the uncharitable sink into hell to reside for many years and are then born as human beings subject to every misery. Those who are free from arrogance, pride, who utter sweet words, who honour those who deserve honour, and give away in charity to the deserving, who are devoted to the good of all, and bear ill-will towards none, go

to heaven to enjoy the company of the gods and on return to earth live free from care and anxiety. Kings who are devoted to righteousness and who protect the good and chastise the wicked with discrimination, attain likewise to those regions which belong to men of righteous deeds. On the other hand, furious dogs of frightful mien, crows having iron beaks, flocks of ravens, vultures and other birds, and blood-sucking worms assail in hell the man who transgresses the dictates of virtue. Such a sinful wretch, in consequence of his reckless transgression of the boundaries of righteousness, passes his time in great affliction in the wild wastes that occur in the dominions of the king of Pitris. One who is tainted with cupidity, who loves untruth, who always takes delight in deception and cheating, and who does injury to others through hypocrisy and deception, goes to deep hell and suffers great afflictions for his wickedness. Such a man is forced to bathe in the broad river Vaitarni whose waters are scalding, to enter into a forest of trees whose leaves are as sharp as sword, and then to lie down on a bed of battle-axes. The cow is believed to be a great saviour of its giver. The Sastric injunction that "a cow should not be given to one who is sinful or unrighteous or untruthful, but to one that is devoted to Brahma, who is wise, self-controlled and of good conduct, who never does an evil act when impelled by hunger," is, however, not always observed in practice. Its gift to a Brahman, wise or otherwise, is implicitly believed to be the only means of crossing the Vaitarni. The injunction as to gift of food (*annadana*) which is called *mahadana* in the Sastras, is carried out better, and there is scarcely a Hindu home where food is not given to the hungry every day. In the hot weather when water is scarce, places for free distribution of water to the thirsty traveller are provided in both cities and villages. Cattle troughs are likewise provided for cattle to drink water from, and the injunctions of the Mahábhárata that the giver of water secures a seat in heaven, is implicitly believed in. The excavation of tanks and wells on the part of the rich and the well-to-do, is also undertaken in the belief that it will add to their happiness in the next world. Now-a-days, however, in places where the assessment of revenue is not permanent, its periodical revision and the fear of increase due to a well or tank being excavated in the vicinity to add to the powers of the land, deters many a public-

spirited Hindu from doing so. In the month of Kartik lamps are put up high on poles to light the way of the nightly traveller. Trees are also planted in the belief that doing so secures bliss in the next world—an idea as old as the Mahábhárata. But the pressure of population unfortunately prevents planting of trees on a large scale as land is more urgently required for food-crops. Gifts of lands and even villages are made by the rich to Brahmans in the same belief. But as the donees are generally not worthy of the gifts, donors are, therefore, becoming chary of making them. Our women are even keener about felicity in the next world than men, and many a wife consents to be given away in gift to a priest at a place of pilgrimage and then bought back from him at the price he choses to put upon her (she urging him all the while to fix it as high as possible) in order to have her husband's company in the next world. All these ideas are good, but they require to be carried out with discrimination.

Is evolution upwards or downwards both, or only upwards.

Evolution according to the Sastras is according to knowledge and action (gyána and karma), and, therefore, both upwards and downwards. "There are," says the Mahábhárata, "regions in the kingdom of Yama which are worse than those of this earth, and there, persons addicted to evil ways dwell. After dwelling there they are born in various orders of lower animals, and after passing through various forms of animal-life, as worms, birds, beasts, fishes, quadrupeds for stated periods, are born as men where they can expiate their bad karma by good, and thus help their evolution upwards. Those men that commit sin and then expiate them, become less miserable than those who do not repent. In humanity also the happiness and misery of *jiva* are determined by his karma." The Sastras do not, therefore, say, once a human being always a human being, superior or inferior. Belief in an evolution ever upwards is certainly more comforting than belief in a downward evolution, whether in human or other orders of being. But it is not recognized by the Sastras. Instances of men transformed into lower animals for transgressions in life, retaining memories of their past births and recounting their experiences in each, are cited that re-incarnation is both up and down. The story of king Nriga, who was transformed

into a large lizard and had to reside in a well for making a gift of a cow already given by him to a Brahman, is largely current in Hindu society, and the well where he was confined till rescued by Krishna is still visited by pilgrims. In the Mahábhárata a worm tells Vyasa how he was once a Sudra, possessed of great wealth but very greedy, of a cruel disposition, and full of pride and envy. He was, however, devoted to his parents and, through the favour of the rishi, retained memory of its past lives. The latter helped his progress onwards, and he was again born as Sudra, then a Vaishya, then a Kshatriya, and finally a Brahman, all through his good karma in each incarnation, till he was finally absorbed in Brahman. (Mahábhárata Anusasana Parva, Chapters 117 to 119 abstracted.) That a creature may rise higher or sink lower in the scale of evolution by the action of his past karma is thus a well-recognized doctrine of the Sastras. Among mankind a Sudra performing all the duties laid down for his order and adhering to the path of righteousness is born as a Vaishya, where, if he wishes to rise higher, he performs not only all the duties of his own order, but also controls his mind and senses, is devoted to study, becomes pure in conduct and does good to all. By so doing he is born as a Kshatriya in a noble family, where, by observing the duties of his order as well as practising self-control and practise of righteousness as he did before, he is born a Brahman. Thence if he does not wish to fall, he strictly observes the duties of a Brahman which lead him to the status of Brahm, a condition free from all sin, and all attributes.

Views of Indian Philosophy on life after death.

The more philosophic doctrine of the Sastras on the question of life after death is, however, more likely to commend itself to modern readers than that of transmigration downwards or of heaven and hell being specified localities for the abode of the good or the bad in life. According to it, man's own senses are heaven and hell; well controlled they are heaven, uncontrolled they are hell. It was accordingly declared by Rishi Sanata-Sujata that there was no death, and when asked by King Dhritrashtra as to why asceticism was performed in order to avoid death, he replied: "Death is avoided by particular acts; the other opinion is—there is no death, thou hast asked me

which of these is true. Listen to me, O king, as I discourse to thee on this, so that thy doubts may be removed. Know, O, Kshatriya, that both of these opinions are true. The learned are of opinion that death results from ignorance. I say that ignorance is death, and the absence of ignorance (*i.e.*, knowledge) is therefore immortality. It was from ignorance that the *Asuras* became subject to defeat and death, and from the absence of ignorance the gods attained to the condition of Brahma. Death does not devour creatures, like a tiger; its shape itself is unascertainable. Besides this form of death some imagine *Yama* to be death. This, however, is due to the weakness of their own minds. Knowledge of Brahma is immortality. That (imaginary) god (Yama) holds his sway in the region of the *Pitris*, being the source of bliss to the virtuous and woe to the sinful. It is by his command that death in the form of wrath, ignorance, and covetousness, arises among man. Swayed by pride, men always walk in unrighteous paths. None amongst them succeeds in attaining to his real nature. Their understandings clouded and themselves swayed by passions, they cast off their bodies and repeatedly fall into hell. They always follow their senses. This is why ignorance receives the name of death. Those who desire the fruit of work, when the time comes for enjoying it, proceed to heaven, casting off their bodies. Hence they cannot avoid death. Embodied creatures, from their inability to attain to the knowledge of Brahma, and from their connection with wordly enjoyments, are compelled to sojourn in a round of re-births, up, down and around. The natural inclination of man towards pursuits that are unreal, is alone the cause of the senses being led into error. The soul that is constantly affected by the pursuit of objects that are unreal, remembering only that upon which it is always employed, worships only earthly enjoyments that surround it. Desire of enjoyment first kills men. Lust and wealth soon follow. These three, *viz.*, the desire of enjoyments, lust and wealth, lead foolish men to death. They, however, that have conquered their inner self succeed by self-restraint in escaping death. He who has conquered his inner self and does not allow himself to be led away by soaring desire, kills it, regarding it as of no value, by the aid of true knowledge. Ignorance, assuming the shape of *Yama*, cannot devour the sage who kills his desires in this manner. He

who follows his desires is destroyed along with his desires. He, however, who overcomes desire, most certainly drives away all kinds of woe. Desire is, indeed, ignorance and darkness and hell in respect of all creatures, for swayed by it they lose their senses. As drunken persons in walking along a street reel towards ruts and holes, so men under the influence of desire, misled by unreal joys, run towards destruction. What can death do to a person whose soul has not been confounded or misled by desire? For him death has no terrors like a tiger made of straw. Therefore, O Kshatriya, if the presence of desire, which is ignorance, is to be got rid of, no wish, not even the highest one, is to be entertained or pursued. That soul which is in thy body—associated as it is with wrath and covetousness and filled with ignorance,—that is death! Knowing that death arises in this way, he that relies on knowledge entertains no fear of death. Indeed, as the body is destroyed when brought under the influence of death, so death itself is destroyed when it comes under the influence of knowledge." (Mahábhárata Udyoga Parva, Chapter 41.)

Hindu philosophy thus makes the mind as the cause of bondage and release. Attached to objects of sense it is in bondage, unattached it is released: "Subtle bodies and such as spring from father and mother, together with the great elements, are three sorts of specific objects. Of these the subtle bodies are everlasting, and those produced of parents are perishable. The mergent subtle body, formed primævally, unconfined, permanent, composed of Buddhi and the rest down to the primary elements, migrates, is without enjoyment, and is invested with dispositions. As a painting stands not without a ground, nor a shadow without a stake, so neither does the Linga (Buddhi, &c.,) subsist supportless, without a specific (body). Formed for the sake of the spirit, the subtle body plays its parts like a dramatic actor, on account of the connection of means and consequences, and by union with the predominant power of Nature. By virtue (is obtained ascent to higher planes; by vice, descent to the lower: from wisdom (results) beatitude; and bondage from the reverse. From dispassion results absorption into Prakriti; from passionate attachment, transmigration; from power, non-impediment (of desires); and from the reverse, the contrary. Verily no spirit is bound, nor emancipated, nor does it migrate. It is Nature (Prakriti) alone,

which has many receptacles, and is bound, released, or migrates. By the attainment of perfect wisdom, virtue and the rest become incapable of leading to re-birth ; yet the spirit remains a while invested with body, as a potter's wheel continues to revolve by the impulse previously imparted to it. When the separation of the enlightened spirit from his corporeal frame at length takes place, and Nature ceases to act in respect to it, then is final and absolute emancipation accomplished.'' (Sankhya Karika, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, 62, 67 and 68.)

How death occurs.

The causes which bring about death are, of course, disease and old age. Says the Anu Gita : " When the dissolution of his body is near, man begins to do things injurious to life and health. His understanding becomes perverted, and he brings on diseases leading to death or commits suicide. The wind in his body becoming excited, excites in its turn the heat which pierces his vital parts, causing great pain to the soul now about to escape its mortal casement. The pain that is felt by a living creature in leaving a body is equal to that in entering it. The wind residing in the two vital breaths, Prana and Apana, now rushes upwards and the man becomes destitute of breath and consciousness. The vital parts of his body become overwhelmed with darkness and he fails to know anything: Life is not yet quite extinct, but soon the *jiva* becomes even more agitated by wind and is deprived of everything upon which he could stay in the body. He then draws a long and a painful breath and goes out quickly making the body tremble. All his senses and the mind in their subtle condition accompany him. His karma, good and bad, also goes with him. He has three regions assigned to him eternally. This world which is the field of action, the hell to which doers of evil deeds go in consequence of bad action here, and heaven. Even as one possessed of eyes see a firefly amidst darkness, those possessed of spiritual knowledge see the *jiva* as he leaves and enters the body.'' (Anu Gita, Chapter 17.) This has now been partly verified by experiments made by Professer Gates of America with his new " light rays " on the bodies of animals, and it was found that at death a transparent shadow of the animal, of exactly the same shape, issued out of the body and vanished as it passed upward on the rhodopsined wall. This is the *Linga Surira* of the Hindus.

To the wise death, however, has no terrors. "There is always a new pleasure," says Vashishtha, "in going from one body to another. The body is from its very nature perishable. Why do you, O fools, grieve when you ought to be happy at the thought of approaching death? If after death you are not to be born again, great is your gain; for you are thereby released from a world which is full of trouble and constantly agitated with the fear of gain and loss, existence and non-existence. If after death there is to be another body, new is the pleasure. Death is only the dissolution of the body, and such a dissolution is blessed. If you are afraid of your evil deeds, equal is the fear both in this world and the next. Do you therefore abstain from evil if you wish to secure happiness in both the worlds." "I shall die," "I shall die," "I shall die," so sayest thou. Why dost thou not say, "I shall live," "I shall live," "I shall live." (Nirvana Prakarna Uttardardha, Chapter 101, verses 22, 23, 25, 26, 28.) Thoughts like these deprive death of its terrors, and calm and peaceful is the end of life of the sage and the thinker.

Does the jiva remember his past?

The sage, moreover, preserves the memory of his former incarnations, for with the rise of true knowledge and dispersion of ignorance, the past, the present, and the future appear before him like the present. "Both I and thou," says Krishna in the Gitá, "have passed through many births, but I know them all, thou dost not know them." (Bhagvad Gitá, IV, 5.) In the Aitreya Upanishads, also, Rishi Vamdeo declares: "While dwelling in the womb I discovered all the births of these Devas. A hundred iron strongholds kept me, but I broke them quickly down like a falcon." And having this knowledge he stepped forth after the dissolution of the body and, having obtained all his desires in that heavenly world, became immortal. (V.—v.—14-15.) The question was also put by Rama to Vashishtha as to how Vyása, the father of Suka, who had lived in another Kalpa, could be the same Vyása who was present in Dasratha's assembly, where Vashishtha was lecturing, and the latter replied that he had known often Vyásas and had himself incarnated many times, and that one who is emancipated may, like other beings, be born a hundred times, and yet retain the recollection of all his incarnations. The vision of Lila was, accordingly, related by Vashishtha to show that it is our

vasna (desire or past impression) that hides the memory of our past incarnations, and that with the rise of knowledge of the self all our past births become known. The story goes that a Brahman, named Vashishtha, intensely desired to be a king, and in the next incarnation was born as King Padma, and Arundhati, his wife, who was deeply attached to him, as his queen Lila. The queen was so intensely devoted to her husband that she prayed to the goddess Sarswati that after death her husband's shoul sould not leave the precincts of her inner apartments and that the goddess may show herself when required. The boons were granted, and when the king died, Lila in her grief called Sarswati, who told her where her husband had incarnated. The goddess then took Lila to the place where Padma was born as king. There she saw him seated on a throne surrounded by all the pomp of royalty. Presently another king attacked his dominions and a fierce war ensued. The queen also saw another Lila of the same shape, size, figure, and beauty as herself, sitting by the side of the king, and felt greatly perplexed as to how the second lady could have the same features and be an exact counterpart of herself. She appealed to Sarswati to clear the mystery, saying, that if the real could only exist in time and space, why did she see two Lilas ? Sarswati replied that *vasna* (desire) was the cause of the vision and that with the removal of the *vasna*, all her past and present shall clear the mystery. At death man forgets his nature and thinks himself to be the being he is about to become and identifies himself with what he is born as. But when he knows the real character of the visible (drishya), his vision is restored and time and space do not obscure his vision. It was therefore nothing but the queen's own mind which reflected the past, the present and the future, and the various orders of beings she had passed through. Lila then applied herself to Yoga, and as her spiritual vision was restored, remembered all the various incarnations she had passed through. She was first born as the bride of a Vedyadhara, then as a she-eagle, then as a female hunter, then as a plant, then as a handsome prince in the Saurashtra country, which she ruled for a hundred years, then as a weasel, then as a bird, a bee, a fish, a Chandala, a hunter, a fairy, a tortoise, a goose, a crane, and many other beings, till she was born as a Brahman woman and became the wife of Vashishtha, and then attained her present condition. All that she did in

each incarnation became clear to her, and she found that all her life upon earth was a protracted dream, unreal like the dreams of her daily sleep, and that it was the error of believing each of her incarnations to be real, that was the cause of her not knowing her former incarnations. (Yoga Vashishtha Uttapatti Prakarna.) The vision of King Lavana, of the northern Pandava country, is as wonderful. He was seated in his court when, under the influence of a magic spell, he found himself riding a swift horse in a lonely jungle. The horse left him and the king wandered about hungry and thirsty till he met a Chandala girl who was carrying some food for her father to eat. He implored the girl to give him some food, which she did, on condition of his marrying her and living with her as a Chandala. The king in his distress agreed to it, married the woman, lived with her as a Chandala for sixty years, and had a numerous progeny. He ate the flesh of wild beasts, wore barks and rags, carried logs of wood and passed his days in the jungles exposed to all the vicissitudes of the seasons. A famine then overtook the land and he migrated to another country, where, yielding to the importunity of one of his starving children to give him something to eat, he threw himself into the fire and awoke from his reverie. To test the correctness of his vision, Lavana undertook a journey to the places where he had lived in his dream, and found his aged Chandala mother-in-law weeping for the loss of her royal son-in-law. The places and the persons he met with corresponded with those he had seen in his dream, and the latter's account of his adventures was also a counterpart of what he recollected of his own vision. The explanation of these wonderful phenomena, as given by Vashishtha, is that the mind sees before it what it fancies, that things are real or unreal according as the mind makes them to be, that the remembrance by Lavana of his having lived as a Chandala in his dream, was the internal cause of presenting to him the picture of the Chandala abode as an external reality. The idea which was in the mind of the king was, however, also present in the minds of the Chandala people, and as the "same sentiments and figures of speech occur in different poets, of distant ages and countries, so do the same thoughts and ideas also arise simultaneously in the minds of different people. The thoughts which arose in the minds of the Chandalas corresponded with those in the mind of the king and *vice versâ*, and one idea embraced many

others, and the idea produced the material object." (Uttapatti Prakarna.)

Support of Indian views in the West.

These views of Indians on the subject of life after death, have now found a supporter in a scientist, like Louis Figuier, in his book, called the "Day After Death." The touching story of the author as given in his introduction shows how the death of a dearly loved object on earth, drove him to seek consolation from philosophy, and how the latter solved for him the problem which exact sciences had failed to solve. He starts with saying that of the three elements of which man is composed, *viz.*, the body, or the material substance, the life and the soul, death is the separation of the soul from the body. This separation is affected when the body ceases to be animated by the life. The primary agent of life is the sun. The rays of the sun deposit upon earth animated germs emanating from the spiritualised beings who inhabit it and bring about the birth of plants and zoöphytes. These plants and zoöphytes enclose within the man the animal germ which at death passes into the body of the animal which comes next above it in the scale of creation. Thus from the zoöphyte it passes into the mollusc, the articulated animal, the fish, the reptile, the bird, the mammiferous, becoming perfected in each incarnation and adding to sensation, consciousness, will, judgment, till in the body of the mammiferous it has added to it the principle of causation. Thence it passes into the body of a newly-born infant which is born without memory. If the infant dies before the age of one year, its soul passes into the body of another newly-born child and commences a new existence. This is also the case if the soul has not, during its earthly life, undergone a sufficient amount of ennobling and purification. If it has been sufficiently purified, it leaves the body upon earth and rises through the atmosphere of the ether to enter into the body of an angel or a superhuman being. Thus incarnating, it recovers memory of its past births. Like the earth the other planets also produce the same kinds of beings, from zoöphyte to man under the action of the rays of the sun. From them also beings rise to superhuman beings, if like those on earth they have undergone the necessary purification. These beings possess superhuman faculties, and are independent of time and space. They visit the earth and comfort,

counsel, and aid those who are worthy of the privilege. At the termination of their appointed period of existence, they re-incarnate as arch-human beings. At each incarnation their energy, moral and intellectual faculties, their power of feeling and loving, and their induction of the profoundest mysteries of the universe, are increased, till in the final stage of spiritualized beings they become absolutely perfect. Thence they pass into the sun to send their essence in the shape of animated germs on the earth and other planets for creation and evolution of other beings. In this way does the great chain of nature close and complete that interrupted chain of vital activity which has neither beginning nor end, and which links all created beings into one family, the universal family of the worlds. (Day After Death, Chapter 17, abstracted.)

The author stops short at the elevation of man to the condition of an arch-human being, and has no place for his being absorbed into the Deity, or abiding in His immediate presence, or in heaven constantly blessed with His grace as the followers of the various schools of philosophy in India do. He does not also believe in the Indian, the Greek, the Egyptian doctrine of the human soul ever returning to the body of the animal. Says he, "We believe that the human soul has already passed through this probation and that it can never be renewed. In nature, in fact, the animal has a part inferior to that of man; it is below our species in its degree of intelligence, and it cannot have either merit or demerit. Its faculties do not invest it with the entire responsibility of its actions. It is but an intermediate link between the plant and man; it has certain faculties, but we cannot pretend that those faculties assimilate it to moral man. Thus we reject this doctrine of the return of the human soul to conditions through which it has already passed. Retrogression has no place in our system. The soul through its progressive march may pause for an instant, but it never turns back. We admit that man is condemned to recommence an ill-fulfilled existence, but this new experience is made in a human body in a covering of the same living type and not in the form of an inferior being." (Pp. 252, 253.) The lessons he would draw from this are to elevate one's nature by the practice of virtue, to be good, generous, compassionate, grateful for benefits, accessible to the suffering, the friend of the oppressed, to aspire to the beautiful, to live in the most elevated sphere,

least bound to lower things, to acquire a knowledge of nature and her laws through science, to cultivate the mind and fill it with good and useful ideas, to admire the power of God in learning the wonder of His works, to perform public worship in temples and respect other people's religion, to honor and remember the dead, to look upon death as a change, a transformation, not a dissolution, as a means of uniting us to those whom we love, a passage from a rotten to a beautiful body, from a world of trouble and sorrow to a blessed domain where all happiness is realized. (Chapter 20.) He also tries to find a place for God in the universe, and concludes by saying, "All these celestial bodies without exception, all this anthill of worlds which we have enumerated may be turning round one point, one centre of attraction. What forbids us to believe that God dwells at this centre of attraction for all the worlds which fill infinite space." (Page 307.)

From what we have said in the pages, the reader will probably share our opinion that the above is no advance over the conclusions of Indian philosophers on the question of life after death. But slowly, though unwillingly our conclusions in this respect seem to find acceptance by scientists in the West, and though the light of the physical science comes from the West, it is from Asia that the great voice of philosophy has been heard and shall be heard.

Conclusion.

From this brief and necessarily imperfect survey of some of our institutions, it will be seen that the moving forces of our society have always been *dharma* (righteousness), *satya* (truth), and *tyaga* (renunciation). From the Rishis of the Vedas to the most modern thinkers, every one has, without exception, preached the lesson of righteousness and self-denial. Freedom from egoism, freedom from expectation, looking upon all within an equal eye, and freedom from desire have always been held up as ideals to aim at in all times and circumstances. Doctrines may differ. Teachers may preach their respective dogmas. But the common ground of all our best thinkers is that abstention from injury and looking upon all as our own self, is the only road to bliss. Whether one lives as a student in his preceptor's house, or as a householder in the midst of a crowded city, or as a recluse in the forest, the universal duty of charity, self-restraint and merging of

the individual self into the self of all, is the goal he has to keep always in view. Be good and do good, for the Purusha (the Supreme Self) is Good itself. Learn the lesson of goodness if you wish to secure happiness here, and find ultimate rest in That which transcends even goodness itself, the immortal Purusha. This is what our best teachers teach. Theirs is not a religion of those who are wedded to the world, but of those who wish to rise above it And yet they never neglected worldly prosperity and worldly duty. Only they made both subordinate to righteousness. The Lord, say they, does not make those whom He calls his own and who set their minds upon Him, set their minds solely upon the good things of the earth, which only lead to enmities, quarrels, mental disturbance, vanities, needless exertion and fighting. On the contrary, he often saves his devotees the trouble of the acquisition of objects of desire. If wordly duty and worldly knowledge, ceremonial action, science, polity and various ways of acquisition of wealth, are to have any meaning, they can only have it by leading to *gyána* (knowledge of self), and the only way to it is through single-minded devotion and performance of duty ; all else is mere mockery. This is the goal of Hinduism for those who wish to live it in spirit and not in form. Looking upon the world as a place of sorrow and upon the body as a thing subject to disease, destruction and decay, and knowing that of pleasure there is little and of pain much in the world, and even that little of pleasure not constant, do you do your duty and seek that Supreme seat whence there is no fall. Direct your minds to Truth, betake yourself to that path which leads you to see your self as different than the body, make your minds and senses tranquil like the lake which is unruffled by gusts of wind, look upon all as pervaded by the divine essence, and you will be happy here and hereafter. This is the conclusion of Hinduism.

ओं तत्सत

MISCELLANEOUS.

(I)—TRUTHFULNESS IN MODERN HINDU SOCIETY.

WE have already alluded, in more than one place, to the love of truth and justice which has characterized Hindu society, more or less, in all times and circumstances. The point for consideration, however, is whether the Hindus, as they are, are worse than people of other countries in point of truthfulness, and whether even now they compare favourably with some of the most civilized nations of modern times in this respect. Those who hold the Sastras responsible for the present state of things, have not read them right. Taking a bird's-eye view of the love of truth, and justice which characterized our people at various periods of their history, we find in the Vedic age the motto of the Rishis to be :—"Truth alone conquers, not falsehood. Through truth lies the path of the gods." (Mundakopnishad.) "Asceticism, self-restraint and action are the abode of Brahma, the Vedas are his limbs, and truth is his place of shelter." (Kenopnishad, Chapter IV, verse 8.) "Truth is dharma; therefore, if one speaks the truth, he speaks dharma. When one speaks dharma, he speaks the truth. This dharma is greater than all ; it protects all, like the king protecting his subjects." (Briahadaranyaka Upanishad, Chapter II, Section V, verse 14.) It was probably in times like these that king Harischandra not only gave away all that he had, but even sold himself and his wife and child as slaves to keep his vow of truth. The story of Nichiketas in the Kathopnishad shows how sons sacrificed themselves to keep inviolate the vows made by their fathers. Such stories, even if they were not based upon facts, were intended to convey a high moral ideal, and as the internal evidence furnished by the Sastras shows, reflected the spirit of the age, for throughout the whole of the Upanishad literature we find truth and self-sacrifice to be the guiding principles of the lives of people of the period. Later writers describe this age to be the Golden Age when dharma constituted of truth, charity, self-restraint and self-sacrifice flourished in full force. With the advance of Aryan society downwards into the plains of India, and the multiplication of towns and kingdoms, dharma lost much of the absolute importance it once possessed, and expediency began to creep in.

But it was distasteful to the people who still tried to adhere to the ancient ideal. In proof of this we need only cite the example of Rama indignantly repelling the suggestion made by Javali regarding the futility of keeping vows made to departed ancestors. Says Javali :—

"There is no future life : be wise,
And do, O Prince, as I advise.
Enjoy, my lord, the present bliss,
And things unseen from thoughts dismiss."

To this Rama replies :—

"Truth is all duty : as the soul,
It quickens and supports the whole.
The good respect this duty : hence
Its sacred claims I reverence.
The warrior's duty I despise
That seeks the wrong in virtue's guise !
Those claims I shrink from, which the base,
Cruel, and covetous embrace.
The heart conceives the guilty thought,
Then by the hand the sin is wrought,
And with the pair is leagued a third,
The tongue that speaks the lying word.

. . . .

Base were the deeds thy lips would teach,
Approved as best by subtle speech.

. . . .

Those who in virtue delight,
And with the virtuous live,—
Whose flames of holy zeal are bright,
Whose hands are swift to give,
Who injure none and good and mild,
In every grace excel,
Whose lives by sin are undefiled,
We love and honor well."

(Griffith's Ramáyána, Book II, Chapter 109.)

As time went on, expediency began to assert itself more forcibly, till in the time of the Mahábhárata even those who had otherwise set before themselves the loftiest ideals of truth and justice, were forced to yield to circumstances. Ruefully did the

great Kuru leader Bhishma, when asked not to fight for the Kauravas, because he was as much related to them as to the Pandavas, tell Yudhishthira: "Man, O King, is bound by self-interest. Gain is the slave of no one. Truly do I confess to thee, I am bound to the Kauravas by gain." The same was the confession made by Drona and Shalya. We have already alluded to Yudhishthira's having had to speak an untruth on the field of battle in saying that Asswaththama, the son of Drona, was slain, though in fact an elephant and not a warrior of that name had died. Yudhishthira did not say so willingly and regretted it, and was punished for it in being given a sight of hell. On every other occasion he indignantly repelled all attempts at compromising truth. He was exhorted by Arjuna to act like other men of the world, and was told, "We never see wealth that has been earned without doing some injury to others. It is even thus that kings conquer this world. Having conquered, they call that wealth theirs, just as sons speak of the wealth of their sires as their own. The royal sages that have gone to heaven have declared this to be the duty of kings" But he replied: "I shall not, for thy sake, tread the path thou recommendest. When the very gods fall down from heaven and great rishis from their respective positions of eminence, who that is acquainted with truths of causes (and effects) would wish to have even heavenly prosperity? Insignificant kings, having performed divers acts relating to divers means of kingcraft . . . often slay a great king through some contrivance. Reflecting on these circumstances, this nectar of wisdom (truth) has come to me. Having attained it, I desire to get a permanent, eternal and unchangeable place for myself." (Mahábhárata Shanti Parva, Chapters 8 and 9.) Krishna, the greatest politician of his time also, never lost sight of the ideal of truth set up in the Sastras, nor of the penalty which a departure from it involved. The law of Karma, described elsewhere, was to him as inviolate as to any of his predecessors, and he knew full well that as soon as an individual or a nation departed from it, he or it had to pay the penalty, and he recognized it in the case of his own family and kinsmen being destroyed through their own iniquity. Although, therefore, in the Epic period the Hindus had much fallen, they did not approve of expediency and followed it unwillingly.

In later times also, expediency did not assume the importance it did in other nations of that period. In the Vishnu Purana

which is later than the Mahábhárata, we find Prahlada when asked by his father Hiranyakashipu to recite what he had learnt of politics, replying as follows : "Forsooth, I have been instructed in all these by my preceptor, and have learnt them; but I do not approve of all of them. For the subjection of friends and foes, four expedients have been prescribed by all, *viz.*, conciliation, gift, punishment, and sowing dissension. But, O father, be not angry, I know neither friends nor enemies. O thou of mighty arms, where there is nothing to be effected, what is the use of resorting to means for effecting it? O father, it is useless to talk of friend or foe in Govinda, who is identical with all beings, manifest all over the universe, the lord of it, and the great soul. The great Vishnu exists in thee, in me as well as in all other creatures. What then is the use of making such distinction, as he is a friend, he a foe! It is useless, therefore, to cultivate such tedious or unprofitable sciences which contain but false knowledge." (Vishnu Purana, Part I, Chapter 19.)

The Bhagvata, which is even later than the Vishnu Purana, says: "Although dharma (duty), artha (wealth), and káma (enjoyment), as well as various branches of learning like logic, polity and the various professions, are all relatively true, for helping one in emerging his individual self into the Universal self, yet for those who are uninterruptedly devoted to the Supreme, there is no necessity of these." On the contrary, "We seek shelter in Thee who art the embodiment of truth, who art the goal of truth, whose vow is truth, who art attained by Truth, who art Truth itself, before, during, and after the appearance and disappearance of the visible Universe, who art the origin of Truth, who abides in Truth, who art the Truth of Truth; and who leads Truth and Righteousness." These and similar doctrines are met with at every turn in the Puranic literature of the period and reflect the spirit of the people and their ideals.

The same continued to be the case later on, and even in the Mahomedan period, although Hindu society was not the simple and truthful society it once was, it challenged the admiration of all foreigners who knew it. There was much flattery and exaggeration, but little diplomacy in the modern sense of the term, in Mahomedan courts, and when put upon their mettle, people did not hesitate to speak out the truth.

In the Hindu society of to-day, fallen as it is, those arts of diplomacy, those subtle methods of making-money by false advertizements, those commercial frauds and those soft and empty nothings which form such important features of life in other civilized countries, are also generally unknown. In the field, the counter or the bank there is even now as much as perhaps more, truthfulness, more regard for honor, more disinterested charity than in the corresponding places elsewhere. English law does not encourage wagering contracts, and yet lakhs of rupees worth of such contracts in grain, opium, indigo, sugar, &c., are daily made and fulfilled to the letter in all commercial centres in India. The great majority of our traders and bankers fight shy of puffing up their goods. Written contracts are seldom resorted to; verbal contracts are more common. In all towns of importance hundreds of rupees are hourly lent and borrowed at low rates of interest, to be repaid the same evening without any record being kept by either borrowers or lenders. People trust strangers living hundreds of miles away and send goods to order freely, and are not the worse for doing so. Had the standard of truth and honesty been what we see in the law courts, the trade of the country would have long come to a deadlock. A banker's books, in spite of all the frauds and forgeries that daily come up before the courts, are as much trusted now as in times gone by. Oaths on the Ganges' water or other sacred objects are as freely resorted to now as before, and the person who agrees to abide by his adversary's oath in this manner, does so on the assurance that the latter will either speak the truth, or be visited with the consequences immediately both in this life as well as in that to come. Even the Hindu journalist or the orator who in the heat of political controversy exaggerates his adversary's defects, or the lawyer who pleads a cause in Court, or the candidate for official favour who conceals the truth from his superiors, or the litigant or witness who lies in Court, would not generally be found to be worse than his compeer elsewhere. Experience shows the contrary, and class for class, or individual for individual, the average Hindu shall be found to be as truthful as the average European or American. And those who know the inner workings of our society, and have lived and moved in it, will, I think, concede that even as they are, the people of India

are, as a whole, not worse than people of other countries in point of truthfulness. They have many defects of character but utilitarianism has not as many followers here as elsewhere. If English education has done to raise the moral character of the natives of India in all departments of the public service, the Bar and other learned professions, and has enabled educated Hindus to meet educated Europeans on equal terms, both in point of ability and a high standard of rectitude and love of duty, it has done so because the seed was already there. It did not impart and plant in us the seed of truthfulness, which was already there All observers have noticed it; for instance, Sir Lepel Griffin says: "Judged by any truthful standard, the people of India are on a higher level of morality than Englishmen." On the other hand, those who take part in public life in India, form but a small fraction of the population, and speaking for the great majority of the latter, even when they are untouched with modern ideas, they are not worse than their compeers elsewhere in point of honour or truth fulness. There has certainly been a great change in Indian society of late, but its traditions are even now not so unhealthy as they are thought to be. Exaggeration, a certain want of accurate thinking, love for the ideal in preference to the actual, may be the characteristics of some of our people or of a portion of our literature. But the Hindu does not certainly exaggerate more than the European when advertizing his wares, and in business where accuracy is essential, he is as accurate as the European. In fact, it is a matter of common knowledge that an accountant who has been trained in the Hindu system of accounts, is more prized in a European bank or firm for his accuracy than one trained in the English system. The love of the ideal is also after all not so bad as it is thought to be; for worldly prosperity and wordly wisdom do not always conduce to the highest end of man. On the other hand, no society, in which we find kings being exhorted by rishis to be "embodiments of truth, in truth the world abides, in truth dwell all virtues, even immortality itself," can, if it keeps up to such ideals, be unhappy. All that need be done is to point out to it how it can attain to those ideals consistently with the circumstances under which it is now placed, and he who does so in a calm and dispassionate spirit should be counted its greatest friend. The ancient ideals are not

mere cant nor intellectual falsehoods. They are truth itself, and Indis cannot do better than to keep them steadily in view and try to attain to them.

II.—Reform Movements in India.

(Reprinted with permission and corrections from the East and West.)

Christmas week in India is generally a week of activity, not only among the Christians who celebrate their festivals and enjoy the season with their friends, but also among the natives who devise and discuss various schemes for the improvement of their condition. A number of congresses and conferences meet at this season of the year for political, social, and religious discussion, and the otherwise dull monotony of every-day native life gives place to activity all along the line. To an outside observer this activity of the natives of India in so many spheres of public usefulness is especially striking as the result of the present contact of the East with the West. Many, however, doubt the usefulness of this activity, because of its spasmodic character and of its want of ideals steadily aimed at and pursued. There can, however, be no doubt of the vast impetus which the Indian mind has received of late in the direction of reform, and the aim of every well-wisher of the country ought to be to point out the line which it should follow in order to make its efforts fruitful and the gain commensurate with the time and energy spent on such occasions. I have watched many of these movements ever since their inception, and have taken part in those that have the social improvement of the country in view. I have also full sympathy with everything that tends to advance our country a step further in the direction of prosperity or political progress. If, therefore, I have ventured to offer a few remarks on the net results of all that has hitherto been done, it is not in any spirit of carping criticism, but because I wish to see all genuine reform movements flourish and do the good intended.

The Indian National Congress has outlived many of the charges which used, at one time, to be levelled against it. It has, however, yet to command the attention which the charac-

ter of its deliberations deserves, and this is due not only to the fact that the people to whom it appeals are naturally a very slow and conservative people, and the classes which are likely to be affected by the reforms it advocates, naturally reluctant to give up the powers and privileges they have so long enjoyed, but its efforts want that degree of thoroughness and persistency which alone can make an impression upon a nation like the English. It has yet to have amongst its workers men who will devote the whole of their time and energies to the political amelioration of their countrymen, who will divide among themselves the subjects which the Congress discusses, fully study them and collect all available and correct information, and present it to the Government and the public for consideration. The demands of the Congress are formulated every time it sits. Good speeches are often made in support of these demands. But what is required is not merely speeches at a particular season of the year, but activity all the year round as well as full and definite information on the subjects discussed by those who have made them their study. Take, for instance, the two great questions of famine relief and the condition of the masses, which are occupying public attention now-a-days. No resolution will appeal to those who require facts so forcibly as correct and reliable data, showing how the present system of famine relief has proved to be defective, and how it can be remedied. The Congress can most effectually do it by deputing some of the members of its own provincial committees to visit a number of villages and collecting all necessary facts. The increasing drain of the wealth of the country is also patent to every observer, but most impartial Englishmen will require facts showing in what specific instances the present system has affected the condition of the masses, and how it can best be modified to make them more prosperous.

The same may be said of the subject of industrial development which is so closely connected with the growing poverty of the land. It is now the opinion of all who can think that there is no other solution, no other haven of refuge for India except an industrial regeneration, consisting not only in the revival of old industries and fostering of new ones, but also in competition with the West in production in quantities and at rates which would pay. Even one who is not an expert in this matter would at once say that steam

and electricity, which have revolutionised the industries of he West, are required to be largely employed in the East in order to compete with the West, in regard to articles of everyday use with which the latter floods it. But where is the spirit of self-help and enterprise? Where is the enormous amount of capital and organisation necessary for such regeneration? Government ought certainly to be asked to do its share of the work in giving greater encouragement to technical education, regulating the import duties, and in some instances acting as pioneer in starting model workshops for the training of native youths, or encouraging their being trained in Europe through scholarships founded by it. But the capital and the enterprising spirit must come from the country itself. As Mr. Wacha forcibly put it, you may send your most intellectual and practical countrymen to Europe, America or Japan for industrial and technical education, but of what use will they be if the capital and the enterprise of the country fail, to avail themselves of the instruction they have received? The Vaishya community of Upper India have shown their practical interest in this question, and lately sent a Vaishya student to Japan to learn glass-making, but before sending this young man, they carefully considered as to how his services were to be utilied. This gentleman has now come back as an expert in silk, not glass, and the Sabha soon hope to utilize his services. Talking to a prominent member of the Congress on the regeneration of India, I pointed out to him the necessity of the question of the industrial development of the country forming a principal subject of discussion at the sittings of the Congress. This has now been done with the addition of an Industrial exhobition held with the Congress. But in order to result in something substantial, the Congress ought to take immediate action in collecting full and correct information regarding the present condition of the various arts and industries of India, how each of them has been affected by Western competition, and how each could best be revived In spite of its growing poverty, there are, I am sure, still in this country classes of people who, even though they are not able to command the enormous capital of people in the West, can yet combine and raise decent sums for paying industries. They have done so in the matter of cotton, iron and other industries both in and outside presidency towns. If new and profitable fields of investment

were pointed out to them, I am sure they would no longer be at a loss as to where to invest their money. This can only be done by disinterested persons who are fully in touch with the present condition of the arts and industries in the West, and who realize what is required in the East, taking up the question with some earnestness of purpose. The functions of Government in a matter like this are after all very limited. It is the people who have taken the initiative in their own industrial regeneration in Europe and America. There they are watchful of their own interests. If England invades America with her industry and enterprise, America retaliates by starting trusts and concerns as gigantic as her rival's. Unless India does the same, its wealth cannot but be drained off in the way it is being done now. No indulgence in regrets will remedy the situation unless what we regret for is remedied, which can only be done by copying the Englishman's persistence and enterprise in investing his capital in other than Government securities or money-lending or banking business. Mr. Stead has of late been telling John Bull to wake up. Let the well-wishers of India tell the same to their country, not merely by speeches but in the way Mr. Stead is doing.

The other questions discussed in Congress, *viz.*, the larger introduction of a representative element in the Councils of the Empire, the widening of the sphere of the employment of the natives, the separation of the judicial and executive functions, the retrenchment of military expenditure, have now passed the stage of discussion, and have come within the sphere of practical politics. All that seems to be necessary is to show in what specific instances the introduction of a larger or more vital representative element in our Councils, or in what classes of appointments a larger employment of the natives of the country will do good, how our military expenditure can be best curtailed, and how judicial and executive functions separated without impairing the efficiency of the administration. Some useful literature has already grown up round these subjects, mainly through the efforts of the Congress, but in order to make a deeper impression upon those to whom it appeals, it should be persistently kept up to date, new facts collected to illustrate the extent of the evils complained of, and presented to the public in an unbiassed manner. What seems to be wanting in all our reform bodies is persistency of action. They are all very elo-

quent at a particular season of the year, but seem to lack energy to work all the year round. A learned doctor, who met me the other day, told me that what we lacked was not the backbone which, according to him, was a subsequent evolution, but even a motor cord which precedes the backbone. With this defect unremedied, the prospect of the regeneration of India by the natives of the country is rather remote. All our movements suffer from want of vitality, and only start up into life periodically. This is not a very pleasant outlook.

The Indian Social Conference, which seeks to secure for our homes what the Congress seeks to secure for us from the Government is, also, not free from this charge. Its members, who are very distinguished men, meet every year after the Congress is over, pass resolutions against the customs of early marriages, extravagance on occasions of marriages and funerals, disqualifications attending foreign travel, re-marriage of widows, elevation of the lower classes, etc. The subjects must necessarily be hurriedly discussed, for the sittings are over in a few hours, with the undesirable spectacle of the Conference not commanding that influence in the country which it ought to. Its programme is much too long for the few hours it sits. If it would curtail its subjects of discussion, and take up only one or at the utmost two at a time, and present to the country facts and information collected from every available source during the year, as well as suggest practical methods of reform to serve as guides for the various caste and local reform associations in the country, it would better fulfil its aim as the guiding and advising body of all such associations than it does now in treading the same ground year after year. It has no lack of talent among its members, but they should now take stock of the net results in the past, and devise measures for having a better out-turn in the future. The speechifying portion of the Conference may now be more usefully delegated to the various caste and subordinate associations which have to stir up masses of people to recognize the evils of the present system. The Conference should be only a deliberative body consisting mainly of those who have devoted their time and attention to the questions before it, and who can bring knowledge and experience to bear upon its deliberations.

Regarding the various subordinate associations for social reform, which also meet at either this or other times of the year, it must be said with a feeling of satisfaction that most of them are doing good work in their own way, and some of the smaller ones possess much greater vitality than more pretentious movements, and are steadily making their influence felt in the communities in which they are at work. They have in many cases been able to achieve substantial results with comparatively little show of eloquence in the short time they have been in existence. Take, for instance, the Vaishya, the Kayasth, and other caste Conferences of Upper India, which are now doing much practical good in their respective communities. In the Vaishya Conferences, which met at Cawnpore and Agra as soon as the resolution regarding regulation of marriage expenses was passed, the local leaders of the caste, present at the meeting, offered to carry it out as soon as possible, with the result, that *panchayats* of certain sections of the Vaishyas which had been at loggerheads for many years previously, met and prepared scales of expenditure to be incurred on such occasions. They stopped *nautches* and the throwing away of money on occasions of marriage and other ceremonies, and the rules were publicly accepted by all the people of the caste. The effect of this upon the other sections of that community has been that similar rules have been framed by the latter for their respective sections. The Conference also introduced a system of pledges on the part of its members. A large number of persons present signed these pledges, some unconditionally, some with reservation, but all intending to carry out what they had promised. Stock is taken every year of how far the pledges had been carried out, and in many cases they are carried out, and one village association whose members had shown themselves most successful in this direction, lately got a silver medal for its efforts. This is the right spirit to work in and ought to animate all reform bodies in the country. As Sir Antony MacDonnell said in reply to the address of the Vaishya Maha Sabha, they had caught the true spirit of national development in recognising that in order to raise a good superstructure, they must lay their foundation deep and firm. This they cannot do, unless they look the evils of their society steadily into the face and put their shoulder to the wheel to remedy them. The evils are growths of centuries,

and if in one generation they can make people recognise the present customs as evils, they will have done some good work ; for once an evil is recognised to be an evil, society, however slow or backward, will not be long in remedying it. Only they must approach all ranks to make them recognise the evil, and not leave it to some outer fringe to do so. And his parting advice was : " Do not pitch your ideals too high nor endeavour to enforce ideals above the level of human goodness. This should, in my opinion, be the motto of all social reform in India."

The last great feature of our Indian activity are our religious conferences. From the advocates of the present system to its most pronounced opponents, all meet at various times of the year to devise means for the religious regeneration of India, holding as they do, rightly, that without a national religion and a national ideal, no progress of Indian society is possible. But when we come to what should be the ideal, what the religion, we find ourselves lost in confusion.

Our Pandits and Sastris meet in Bombay or elsewhere to discuss as to whether the Vedas are the revealed word of God without any intermediate human agency ; whether any limit of time could be assigned to them ; whether they are themselves a sufficient authority for all that is said in them, or require reason to supplement it ; whether the customs of early marriages, shradhas, etc., ought to be recognised as they are or with some modifications; whether the worship of the gods as now in vogue is correct, and other topics of a like nature. The Arya Samaj, on the other hand, denounces worship of many gods as idolatrous, condemns the shradhas as they are now performed, limits caste distinctions to moral and mental qualifications, and wishes to trace everything that is now claimed as the achievement of Western science to the hymns of the Vedas. The members of the Theosophical Society meet for the purpose of discussing the question of how far it is possible to blend the old order with the new. They also discuss other subjects ranging much higher than the sphere of the average Indian intellect of these days, while another movement started on the model of the Religious Parliament of Chicago aims to let all religions meet on a common ground. It seeks to promote a religious spirit among men of all faiths, affords a common platform for the advocates of each to show to the best advantage the vital princi-

ples of his faith, without entering into hostility or controversy with people of other faiths, and to bring within the easy reach of every one trustworthy information about every form of religion, and leave him to judge of its merits.

The Dharam Mahamandal is a counter-movement to the Arya Samaj, and seeks to defend the old order against all attempts at innovation. It would keep intact even such portions of it as the changing circumstances of Hindu society require to be modified. It appeals largely to the masses of Upper India, and provides good and lucrative work for many a Pandit who has the gift of a fluent tongue. It has proved very attractive to those who see no good in change or are content to let Indian society take care of itself or would not examine its shortcomings beyond the veriest surface. The advocates of the religion of Sri Radhaswami of Agra, some of whom are men of education and culture, also meet in their Satsang and preach doctrines akin to Yoga.

These are some of the principal religious movements now flourishing among us with more or less vigour. Some of them possess a considerable amount of vitality and are able to show more substantial results than many of our purely social or political movements. The Theosophical Society and the Arya Samaj of Lahore have Colleges which command the sympathy of not only their own followers, but of outsiders also. They have, moreover, been largely instrumental in turning the current of Indian thought towards, and not away from, India, besides bringing much of our old literature and philosophy within the easier comprehension of readers both in the East and the West. They also discuss important questions of social reform, and Mrs. Besant's "Ancient Ideals in Modern Life" has placed the whole question of reform in the most practical shape possible. The question, however, is, what is the direction in which all this activity is moving? That there has been of late a great upheaval of the Indian mind, is undoubted, but whether it is in a proper direction is questioned by many whose opinions are entitled to respect. The old order cannot last. It must be modified to suit the changing circumstances of our society. Our ancient ideals will have to be kept up, but if we are to take the place which should belong to us in modern

civilised society, they will have to be adapted to the times. Our religion and philosophy are now being more largely studied in the West than in the East, and the influence they are exercising on the thought of Western countries is very considerable. But in the West they know what is good in our past and what is not; what is practicable and what otherwise. We shall have to do the same. Our past is great, but the greatness of the past will not make us great, unless we resolve to be like those whose purity of life and steadiness of aims and loftiness of ideals made them achieve it. Not to move at all and merely sit, admiring the past, means death; to rush headlong into change in disregard of the past, means ruin. To choose the mean between these two extremes, means regeneration for India, and this ought to be the direction in which all reform ought to move. We cannot, for instance, revive the four Ashrams of the Rishis of old in their entirety, without doing violence to the present condition of our society with its growing love of ease and comfort, its multiplication of articles of luxury, the training now given to its youth in schools and colleges and universities fashioned on Western models, the disappearance of its isolation from the rest of the world, and its facilities for interchange of thought and its contact with a people who are accustomed to look more on the objective than the subjective side of life. There is, however, no reason why the life of the Indian student of even these days should not be lived more simply than it is now, why his marriage should not be delayed till he is able to know the nature of the marriage relation, habits of greater reverence for elders inculcated in him more largely, and why he should be given not merely secular education which leaves him without any ideals in life, but also a religious education which could serve him in the hour of trial and misfortune. There is also no reason why the modern householder should be so intently bent upon personal aggrandizement, and be so careless of what does not concern his own immediate welfare. He can do much worse than set before himself the goal in life of his own ancestors in the past, how it inspired them to noble deeds and noble thoughts and left for him a legacy which not only he but all the world is proud of. The Indian parent ought not only to be anxious for the education of his children, but should also set before them the example of a noble

life, as did many of the Rishis of old, while the Indian mother, instead of being the family drudge, ought to be the queen of the household the Vedas wish her to be. Indian husbands who discuss the problem of social reform on the platform may most usefully carry the discussions in the homes and thus pave the way for their children receiving that home education which moulds the character of the nation. Charity, gratitude and veneration which characterised the Aryan household of ancient times ought to characterise our Aryan household now, while our elders, after they have enjoyed the pleasures of life and found their hair turning grey and their sons ready to take up their burdens in life, may well devote the rest of their lives to act as guides and counsellors of the youth of the nation. They need not retire into the jungles and be religious mendicants to devote themselves to prayer and meditation and realisation of their ideals in life. Their country expects them to serve it with their ripe experience, to guide it onwards. It is wrong to say there is no hope of regeneration for India. The situation, though it seems disheartening, is not altogether so hopeless as some pessimists think it to be. There is yet life in the nation ; only it requires to be regulated and guided in the proper channel. This depends upon how our public men act in the present. "Now or never" should be their motto. The choice hitherto has been between attachment to ruinous customs and at headlong rush after ideals which may also prove our ruin. What the country requires is, brave, clean hearts, fired with enthusiasm for all that is good and noble. If the result of so much activity is not a thousand, not even a hundred of such hearts, the sooner we retrace our steps the better.

III.—The Indian Sadhu.

What can be done for him?

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The Indian sadhu has of late been a subject of public attention, and various suggestions have been put forward as to how to make him a more useful member of the community. But unless the laity, who support him, show more discrimination in their charity, nothing

good is likely to result. I have intimately mixed with this class of people for the last fifteen years; and the more I know of them, the more convinced I feel of the uselessness of outside effort to improve their status or utilise their services in the cause of religion. There are both good and bad sadhus among all the various fraternities now found in India, but the good are getting fewer, and the bad preponderate. Idleness, gluttony, and ignorance are unfortunately features of most of these men; and instead of their devoting themselves to study and meditation, they pass an aimless existence, with no good to themselves or the community which maintains them. Those of them, who own *maths* or *gaddis*, find money enough to live in a style which any Indian prince might well envy. At the last *Kumbh*, in Hardwar, I spent some time in making a more intimate acquaintance with the ways of these people and was astonished at the command of wealth and the good things of life possessed by many of their fraternities. Costly equipages, elephants, retainers and other paraphernalia of royalty, large and well laid out camps, grand feasts, to which thousands were invited every day and fed on dishes which even the richest householder can scarcely afford, marked the celebration of the occasion on the part of many sadhus. Their evenings were devoted to musical entertainments by people specially trained for the occasion, or lectures on religion to large audiences, more with a view to excite controversy or collect money than to advance the cause of truth. They had brought thousands of rupees from pious householders all over the country, to spend at Hardwar, and sad it was to see the hard-earned money of the people wasted in pomp and show, which did no good either to the givers or the receivers. One of these had a large camp where he gave lectures to large classes of people on the subject of religion. He was a very good speaker, and possessed of much learning. Similar lectures used to be given in other places at the fair. Thinking this to be a good opportunity for getting all the leading authorities on Hinduism together, and having delivered a number of lectures on subjects specially known to each, some of us tried to have these various professors meet on a common platform to take up work. But the project fell through; for no sooner were the invitations sent than sadhus and pandits begin to fight over questions of precedence. Those who were really good and earnest seekers of truth had either left the fair or did not come, or lived in out-of-the-way places.

Many of the best sadhus greatly regret the present state of things, and think that something ought to be done. The general opinion, however, seems to be that unless the householders, who maintain these sadhus, exercise better discrimination in the bestowal of their charity, the bad will never disappear nor take to better ways. It is useless to expect the sadhus to reform or to do work. So long as they get enough, and more than enough to live upon, they will not work. It is also useless to ask Government to legislate in the matter and say that no sadhu will be allowed to take a minor for his disciple except with the written and registered consent of his guardians. Such legislation might prove an engine of oppression in the hands of the police. That it will at once be interpreted by many, as an interference with the Hindu religion seems almost certain On the contrary, as pointed out by a sadhu the other day, if householders observed the rule of the shastras in not keeping sadhus in their houses, and only feeding them and not giving them cash, something good might result.

Another useful method of improving the status of these people will be to found a number of studentships for those who devote their time to study at a regular institution for a number of years. I am trying the experiment of having a small library in Hardwar, where books on all branches of Sanskrit literature are kept. This library has for the present been placed in the Ramkrishna asrama at Kankhal, and the books made available to all who care to read them. They are also lent out at the discretion of the manager. In connection with this institution are given five studentships of five rupees each to five sadhus, on condition of their regurlarly studying in a recognised *pathshala* in Kankhal. If the experiment succeeds, the studentships will be continued. I have discussed the proposal with some of the best sadhus, and they seem to approve of the idea. In course of time, as the number of educated sadhus increases, inducement to idleness and imposture will become less, and we shall have men who will be the religious guides of the community, like their predecessors in the past. Of *Mathas* and *Akharas* we have enough; what we want is more education and less show. Only the other day I met Swami Kaivalya Ashrama, of Uttara Kashi, and it was really a great pleasure to find a man of his attainments and piety showing such a genuine regard for the

canons of his order as to refuse even a blanket in place of his *kantha* (coverlet) which was torn in rags, and yet without being conscious of his renunciation. The same is the case with several others. But they are few and far between, and not very popular except with the more earnest students of religious philosophy. In Hardwar and elsewhere hundreds of costly houses and dharmsalas are appearing for the accommodation of pilgrims and visitors, but a few or no schools where Sanskrit is taught regularly and after a definite standard. If those who devote money in building these places were to spare even ten per cent. for educational purposes, the cause of learning and religion would both be greatly advanced and much good would result. Nothing can be nobler than a number of well-read and well-trained sadhus going about the country lecturing to people on true religion and philosophy, and showing how both could be purified of both superstition and dogma, and restored to their pristine purity as Sankara, Nanak and Kabir did of old. Such an ideal is worth aiming at, and if our educated and influential classes keep it in mind, it may be attained in the near future.

There are at present several lakhs of Sadhus in India, but the number of those who stir themselves in the cause of religion can be counted upon one's fingers, and even these find it more profitable to work outside than in India. On the contrary, they (the sadhus) all seem to think it their right to be fed by the community, and some of them, like the Nagas, go the length of extorting charity not merely by threats, but by personal violence also. I noticed this with much pain in my late trip to Badrinath, where parties of Nagas extorted supplies and cash from shopkeepers at each *chatti* by threats and even worse means. I brought this to the notice of the Local Government. But on consulting the leaders of the Hindu community, I found all of them opposed to the Government proposal of limiting the resort of pilgrims to Badrinath by passes which were not to be granted to beggars, like the Nagas, and had to suggest the strengthening of the local police as the only other course possible. I hope this will minimise the evil. But it shows how the sacred institution of mendicancy is now abused in India.

IV.—BADRIKASHRAMA.

(Reprinted with permission from the East and West.)

BADRIKASHRAMA has been the favourite resort of Hindu ascetics from the time of the Mahábhárata; and those to whom a life of contemplation is more attractive than living in a world full of troubles and cares, have always resorted to it to pass their days in happy seclusion. The ashrama of the rishis Nara-Narayana was the place where Narada went in order to perfect his devotion. It was the place where Krishna himself lived as an ascetic, and where he advised his friend Uddhava to go and pass the rest of his days. It was the place where the Pandavas went on retirement from the cares of sovereignty, and where the Hindus of old placed their swarga or heaven. To a student of Hindu religion and philosophy, places which Sankara, Vyasa and Vashishtha and others trod, cannot but be associated with all that is good and noble, and it has ever been the ambition of the seeker of retirement to live in jungles where the Upanishads were read and commented upon, where the rishis discussed the mysteries of Brahmavidya and realised the truth of what is taught in the Vedas, not merely by argument, but by contemplation of the grandest scenery in the world—a scenery which by its majestic grandeur forbids man from prying into it, but tells him to sit in awe and admiration at the work of Him who made it what it is. It was with thoughts like these that I started on a tour in the hills of Badrinath, and can now say without fear of contradiction that no place in the world is grander than the Himalayas, no place more conducive to elevation of thought than the hills of Badrinath.

I left Agra on the 6th May 1903 and reached Kathgodam the next morning. Thence to Bhimtal is an easy ascent by a good road of about 8 or 9 miles. Bhimtal is largely resorted to on account of its charming lake and mild climate. The lake is very deep, and its waters irrigate a large portion of the country. It is about 5,580 feet long and 1,490 feet broad, and is about 100 feet deep. The height above the sea-level is about 4,500 feet, and altogether it is a very quiet little station to live in. From Bhimtal to Almorah s about 28 miles through hills dotted with tea and fruit gardens, rice and wheat-fields, wild roses, walnuts and other trees for miles

round. This is the Kumaon district. The people of the place are hardy mountaineers, though not so hardy as those of Garhwal. They are free from many of the evils which beset the poor of the plains. They appeared to me to be a good sober lot, contented with tilling their fields and paying their rent to the Government, and living upon what they could save after satisfying the revenue demand. The country is divided into a number of small farms where the farmer pays his rent direct to the Government. There are no zemindars, except in a few places. Each farmer owns the little farm of which he pays the rent. Rice, wheat, madua are the principal crops. The rent is paid at so much per *nali*, and 20 *nalis* make an acre. In some places, it is about 2 annas per *nali*. Each village has its Pradhána or headman, who looks after its local affairs and through whom revenue is paid to Government. Some of these headmen appeared to me to be very good, intelligent men. One of them, whom I met between Ganai and Mahalchori knew some English, and was a man of refined tastes. The most noticeable feature among the tenantry of the place was their deeply religious feeling. Some of those who were impressed as coolies seemed to be more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of religion than those whom they carried. From Bhimtal to Deodwara and Peura, thence to Almorah, is two journeys, through lovely scenery in places picturesque like a panorama. In the morning it is very refreshing to walk in those lonely hills, with the birds in the trees for your companions, and flowers shedding their sweetest fragrance all round. Here you have truly what is called the May of English poets. At Almorah they seemed to suffer from scarcity of water, because of the springs having dried up for want of rains ; otherwise it is a very good place to live in. Bikat Bani is an artificial forest laid out near the town, and it is always refreshing to walk there in the morning. The town stands on the crest of a ridge, and its fort has played an important part in the history of its rulers. It has been in the possession of the British since the conclusion of the Gurkha war of 1815, and is now the headquarters of the Kumaon district. The population is mostly Hindu, the Brahmans being the most advanced and prosperous members of the community. They stand foremost in point of education and occupy almost all places of trust under Government. The Kshatriyas are not all prosperous, but the Vaishyas are. A most

noticeable feature among the Vaishyas of the place is, that they freely take girls in marriage from the Kshatriyas, who as freely intermarry with them as with the Brahmans ; also, that all classes of people freely eat animal food. From the caste names of the Brahmans—Joshi, Punth, &c.,—it is certain that they are foreign to the soil of Kumaon and have come to live here from the Mahratta country. Their features also point to a southern origin. The marriage customs of the people are said to be more closely allied to the system described by Manu than those of any other portion of the Hindus of the present day. It is not, as Mr. Burn, the Census Superintendent for the United Provinces, says in his report, that a Dom, who is a member of the lowest caste in Kumaon, can marry his daughter to a Khus Rajput or a Vaishya ; but that Vaishyas do intermarry with Rajputs is certain. There are two classes of Rajputs here, the real Rajputs and the Khus Rajputs. The latter are people who are said to have become degraded on account of connections with lower tribes. Similarly, there are the Khus Brahmans and the real Brahmans. But I did not find any Brahman, real or Khus, nor any Vaishya marrying in a Dom family. The statement, therefore, that "there are few Banyas or Vaishyas, and these also intermarry with Doms on the one side, and with the Khus Rajputs on the other," as contained on page 216 of the Census Report is due to misinformation. I questioned about 500 Vaishyas who were present at a meeting convened for the purpose of taking practical steps towards social reform among the Vaishyas of Kumaon, and they all told me that while they intermarried with Rajputs, there was not one instance of their having done so with Doms. In order to test the accuracy of this statement, I questioned a number of other intelligent and well-informed independent gentlemen, and they supported the Vaishyas in the above statement. I should therefore think that statements like the above, which give needless offence to a community, should not be made in a public report, or the authority on which they are made should be stated. In this case, I hope, the statement, which is due to a misapprehension, will be corrected.

At Almorah they asked me to lecture on social reform, and I did so to an audience which I was glad to find, was ready to meet the reformer more than half-way. They observe the practices of Hinduism more closely than we in the plains. The ceremony

of performing the yagyopavita is universal among all the twice-born classes. The practices of the Vaishyas are, the Brahmans themselves told me, as good as those of the Brahmans. The ages at which boys are married, are very fair. Only a change is necessary in the marriageable age of girls, and I think if the reformers work on moderate lines, they will soon achieve success. I tried to point out to those who honoured me with their presence at the lecture, the necessity of observing Hinduism more in the spirit than in the letter, and I believe some of them at least felt convinced of the necessity of doing something in this direction. In Almorah the Christian missionaries are as strong as everywhere else, and it does not speak well of the public spirit of the people of this place that they should allow their daughters to be educated by zenana missions when they know how undermining to their religious beliefs are the teachings of that body. Some time ago there was a strong agitation in Almorah against the missionaries, and the people succeeded in establishing a high school as a rival to a flourishing missionary institution. But they have no girls' school there as in many other places of these provinces, even though they grumble that the effect of zenana mission teaching is not what they would like it to be.

From Almorah to Badrinath is about 130 miles. I left Almorah on the 13th May. The stages are Banskhet 13 miles, Dorahat, 13 miles, Choukhutia, 10 miles and Mahalchori 8 miles. This is the limit of the Kumaon district. The journey is by a good road leading through pleasant scenery. In places it is very lovely and the sight of the Ram Ganga running in the valley below, the birds warbling in the trees above, the road winding round the hills, now ascending, now descending the immense forests on the hills around, the walnuts, the wild rose and other jungle trees spreading their grateful and inviting fragrance around, elevate one's thoughts to the Author of all whose command they obey and of whose power and glory they remind man at every turn. At Mahalchori the pilgrim enters the Garhwal district. Here the scenery becomes wilder. In the first three stages, Lohba, Adi Badri, and Karanprayaga, he meets with much the same kind of trees and flowers as he did in Kumaon. Between Lohba and Adi Badri he walks up to the Devali-khal, and then descends for about a distance of six miles. On both sides the hills are covered with lofty pines ; fountains of water cool his way

at every turn. Cascades are falling from the hills, and in the mornings birds greet him with their song of glory. The road winds through shaded arbours created without the hand of man, and sweet-scented flowers invite the traveller to rest his weary limbs at every turn. I reached Adi Badri at noon, and on inquiry as to why it was called Adi Badri, was told that it was the original Badrikashrama of the time of Nara-Narayana. There are two hills here, the Nara and Narayana hills, nearly touching each other. The river between is easily fordable. The hills are covered with vegetation and the valley is free from extremes of heat and cold. All that an ascetic requires to keep his body alive can be easily had here, and the delightful scenery around assists his contemplation. There is therefore little doubt that these hills formed the favourite resort of the rishis of old. I found here a number of old temples built in the ancient Hindu style of architecture, and the one said to have been built by Sankara must be at least 1,000 or 1,200 years old. The main temple is surrounded by a number of smaller ones built at various intervals, some of them at the same time as the principal temple and the others at subsequent intervals. The images in the temples are not old, but the reliefs are. After discussing the matter with the best informed local men, I think that the popular saying which divides the Badrikashrama into Sthula (gross), Sukshama (subtle), Ati Sukshama (very subtle) and Shuddha (pure), points out to Adi Badri, which is the Sthula, to be the first Badrikashrama of the epic times. As you go on, the journey becomes more difficult and the means of subsistence less easily procurable, till in Shuddh Badri, which is the present Badrikashrama, you can get nothing from nature except a few roots, the water of the Alakhnanda and snow all round. In Sthula Badri, which extends from Adi Badri, Karanprayaga to Garuda Ganga, nature is more bountiful and the way easier. From Adi Badri to Karanprayaga is 12 miles. Here you are at the confluence of the Alakhnanda and the Pindar rivers, called by some the Karan Ganga. It is a sight to see the crystal blue waters of the Karan Ganga rushing into the crystal white waters of the Alakhnanda. The pilgrim bathes at the confluence. But the force of the stream is too great to admit of his enjoying his bath. From Karanprayaga the pilgrim goes to Nandprayaga, the confluence of the Alakhnanda and the Nandákini. The road has been newly built, and is much wider than those further up.

Nandprayága has some pretensions to trade, for here, for the first time after leaving Almorah, I saw shops for the sale of brass and copper vessels, bankers' shops, and one bookseller who dealt in Sanskrit and Hindi books. On the banks of the Nandakini, away from the haunts of men, you can enjoy the sweets of contemplation if you can forget for the nonce the world with its turmoils and cares. The road between Karanprayága and Nandprayága having become breached in one place, we had to descend down to the bed of the river for several hundred feet through huge boulders, and could then realise in part the difficulties contended against by those who visited these places in times when there were no roads, no bridges, no villages for sale of provisions or supply of lodgings to the traveller. Truly, as the Hindus say, Badrikashrama is essentially for those who, having played their part in life, go there to die. From Nandprayága to Chamoli is the next stage of some eight miles. Chamoli or Lal Sanga is the headquarters of one of the Deputy Collectors of the Garhwal district. Here the road from Kedar meets the Almorah and Garhwal road. The journey was hitherto not very difficult. But from Lal Sanga it becomes more and more difficult at every stage. The ascent and descent are both very rough and steep, and the road in places rather narrow with the hills over head and the Ganges roaring several hundred feet below. It makes you giddy to look down, and you had better not do it, for once your foot slips you are gone for ever! The next stage is Pipal Koti, about nine miles, which you reach in about five hours. Thanks to the care of the British Government, we have now hanging iron bridges for rope bridges of old, and the number of bridges they have built at various places in the pilgrim route between Hardwar, Badrinath, Ranikhet, and Kathgodam, have earned for them the gratitude of thousands of pilgrims who have thereby been saved from the jaws of death. All these bridges are well and strongly built, and in most of them I could easily go on my *dandi*. Only the one near Nandprayága is rather shaky, and the footpath has given way in places, which makes it rather dangerous for the unwary to walk over it, especially when it is dark. A few miles up Chamoli is the Bribi-Ganga, which, by the falling of a rock, became the Gohana lake. This lake is still several hundred feet deep. and when last it burst, about three hundred

feet of water rolled down the Alakhnanda which caused such great havoc all round. As the lake again becomes full, another overflow is likely to lead to the same disastrous result. The Brihi-Ganga is not a river worth the name; but it is the rock which has made it into a lake, and the rock promises to remain there for some time to come. From Pipal Koti to Kumar Chatti is about twelve miles, and near Gulab Koti, about three miles from Kumar Chatti, you have to climb up one of the most dangerous and the roughest ascents in the journey. The coolies said it was the *Mrityudwara*, or the gate of death. Here you have to climb up several thousand feet between stones roughly placed, one over the other. The *khud* below and the hill above are terrible to look at, and in one place perpendicularly straight is the *khud* with the river like a white streak of water, with no trees, not even a slope to relieve the eye. The hills are all very bald and bare, and no stream of water nor even a refreshing shade lightens the trouble of the journey, and great is the misfortune of those who have to ascend this peak in the day time. It was a piteous sight to see women and old and infirm people creeping up and down the hill, crying for water, or sorrowfully inquiring as to the nearest halting-place. Well might one shed tears of joy at the sight of these poor people braving all the extremes of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, and leaving home for a sight of the Badrikashrama of the Rishis. Truly it is in places like these that you see the force of faith carrying one through all obstacles. The pilgrims are not generally men of position or those who love comfort and luxury. Badrinath is not for the idle or the luxurious, or those who have become enervated under the influence of modern civilisation. It is for those who have no care for the body and are prepared for everything—even death at every turn. And yet the journey is now comparatively much easier than even fifty years ago. What it must have been in the time of Krishna, Vyasa and Sankara, even imagination cannot conceive The beggar-class furnishes the majority of the pilgrims. These beg their way up and down, and private charity is often quite sufficient to relieve much of their want. In 1903 the number of householder-pilgrims was much less than that in other years, and I met only a few men of wealth from Bombay, Bengal, and Panjab. The United Provinces did not furnish many pilgrims to Badrinath. Loud were the

appeals for charity at every Chatti (lodging place) made by these beggars. The Nagas were, however, the best off of the whole lot. Their system of enforcing their demand is unique in the history of Hinduism. At each Chatti they collected all the Banyas, and told them to give them so much *atta*, ghi, sugar, fuel, and cash. They commenced by appealing to their sense of religion. But when they found that sweet words would not carry conviction, they enforced their demands by rougher means and beat every one who resisted them. In one place a refractory Banya had to suffer from a broken arm for resisting the demands of the Nagas. In another place a Banya very cleverly escaped their exaction by saying that he was neither a Hindu nor a Mohammedan, but a Christian. The Nagas are a very rough set of people, stout, well-built, and well-fed, and walking publicly in a state of nature. The shopkeepers were loudest in their complaints against their extortions, and most of them did not earn for days what was exacted from them in the course of a single raid of these beggars. I think something should be done to put a stop to this. There is no strong police in these places, and one or two constables you meet with here and there are scarcely sufficient to control roughs like these. The remedy does not lie in the Banyas' refusing to comply with demands which are enforced by violence, but in checking their exactions by strengthening the police on the road as well as at the Chattis. Should such a state of things remain unmended, it might lower the prestige of Government as well as set law and authority at defiance. There is no interference with religion in controlling ruffians like these, and I hope the matter will attract the attention of the authorities. I found the shopkeepers of Garhwal ready to give as much in charity as their means permitted. Prices there are very high. In some places *atta* sells at four or five annas a seer ; *gur*, two seers a rupee ; *dal*, three seers; gram about as much. No vegetables can be had. In some places burning oil was also conspicuous by its absence. There are few fields worth the name in Garhwal, and grain and other things for those who go or live there have to be carried from long distances by small goats. The shopkeeper does not, therefore, make any fabulous profit by selling *atta* at three or four seers for a rupee. He has to provide free lodgings for his customers, as well as to give away a lot in voluntary gifts. He should, therefore, be protected,

and after considering the matter in all its aspects, I think there is no other means but the above, of protecting him. The beggar-class in Badrinath were very loud in their complaint at the prices charged. But on inquiring into the matter there seemed to be no help for it. All that the Government can do is to see that the provisions supplied are wholesome, and for this purpose periodical examination should be made at every Chatti. It is the bad *atta*, *dal*, and ghi supplied to the pilgrims which cause so much cholera and other diseases.

We now reached Joshi Matha, really Jotirmatha, one of the four seats of learning, founded by Sankaracharya. The village presented the appearance of a deserted place with few people living in it. Cholera had broken out in the neighbourhood, and so mortally afraid is the Garhwali of this *bemári* (disease), that he leaves everything and runs into the jungle to save himself. When the epidemic prevails to any extent, he deserts his nearest relations to save himself. No Garhwali could be induced for love or money to go near a place where he fancies cholera is prevailing. Joshi Matha has ceased to be the residence of the Sanyasis of the Sankara sect for several hundred years. I tried to find out the reason, but the answer given was not satisfactory. What appeared to be the case was that the head of the institution fell into evil ways, and was removed from office by the ruling chiefs of the place, and the institution made over to another sect of Fakirs who called it the Jogi Math. It again changed hands, and the priest of the temple is now a Dakshini Brahman. There is here an ancient temple of Basudeo which is said to have been built by Sankara. The appearance of the temple and its out-houses lend support to the belief that Sankara, or at least his successors, lived here, and that the place was an ashrama of the ascetic and the contemplative. There is here also a temple of Narsingh, not so old as the other temple, and tradition goes that one of the arms of the idol is gradually becoming thinner, and that when it falls off the way to Badrinath will be entirely blocked. Whether this is merely a popular belief, or points to some physical changes in the road leading to Badrinath, cannot be ascertained. The belief is, however, founded upon a sloka met with in the Sanatkumara Sanhita. Joshi Math is the headquarters of the priest and the other establishment of the temple of Badrinath,

when it becomes buried in snow, in winter. Here we have two beautiful fountains supplied from the hills above, and it was a great pleasure to bathe in them. A few miles up is an old temple of Mahadeo, called the Joti Linga, under a tree which must have been at least a thousand or eight hundred years old. From Joshi Matha to Vishnu Prayaga is only one and half miles, but the road is very rough and the descent very steep. Vishnu Prayaga is the confluence of the Vishnu Ganga and the Alakhnanda. Here the pilgrim bathes, holding thick chains of iron fastened to the hills, and yet the other day a woman was carried off by the force of the stream. From Vishnu Prayaga we have the Ati Sukshama Badri, the Sukshama extending up to Joshi Matha. The journey is now not only difficult but dangerous, and fortunate is he who does it safely both ways. The road is not in the charge of Government, but is repaired by the managers of the Badrinath temple from the temple funds, so they told me. If it is so, the authorities of the temple ought to be made to keep it in better repair; at present it is very unsafe and accidents are common. If it is in the charge of Government, they cannot do better than take it up at once, instead of waiting for the completion of the rest of the road from Hardwar. I am informed that they are going to spend about four lakhs of rupees over the pilgrim route in ten years. The latter has been greatly improved of late. But the road from Vishnu Prayaga to Badrinath, a distance of about 20 miles, calls for immediate attention, and its repair cannot be undertaken a day too soon. In some places I measured it and found it not more than three or four feet broad, with a very deep khud on one side and a hill rising up to the skies on the other. From Ghat Chatti it becomes worse and you have to climb up between stones roughly placed one over the other, for several hundred feet over a narrow footpath of about two feet, with the Ganges below and the hills above. If you look down you may roll down the *khud*. If you look up you may smash your head against the rock. The pilgrim has therefore to follow the traditional song of the bird *panchipagdhyana, mukh Rama, Rama.* (Wayfarer, attend to your feet; keep it steady and repeat *Rama, Rama.*) Accidents to cattle and men are not rare, and the khud of the Ganges bears witness to many an unwary traveller having lost his life by missing his step. Only the other day a woman who was being carried in a *khandi* (basket-

chair) met her death in this way. Not only are the steps rough and dangerous and the road very narrow, but the incline in some places is very steep and the risk of your foot slipping very great, and the wonder is that in spite of so many dangers the journey is fearlessly attempted by men, women and children in the belief that Badrinath Vishal will carry them safe through the danger. Between Vishnu Prayaga and Pandukesar is a place called the Lokapala-tirtha, where people perform the sraddha of their ancestors. The tradition of the place is, that the pond there is surrounded by a number of birds which would not let straw or any other thing remain in the water, but would immediately bring it out. We now come to Pandukesar, really *Pandava khsetra*, the field or the place of the Pandavas Here we have the unique sight of a slab of stone, called the Pandava Sila, placed on the top of an apparently inaccessible hill on the other side of the river. It makes one giddy to look at it, and yet tradition says this was the place where the Pandavas were born. That the Pandavas were born in the hills is true, but whether it was here or elsewhere is uncertain. King Pandu, according to the Mahábhárata, went to the mountains of Naga-shatta, whence he crossed over to the mountain of Kalakuta, thence to Gandhmadana, thence to the lake of Indradyumna and thence to the mountain of a hundred peaks. But it is doubtful if Lokapala-tirtha is the Indradyumna-tirtha and the Pandukesar the mountain of a hundred peaks of the Mahábhárata. At Pandukesar we have again a very old temple of Vishnu, called the Yoga Badri. The temple is said to have been built by Sankara. But whether it was built by him or after him, it is a very old temple. Here I saw four very old copper-plates bearing inscriptions in the old Devanagri characters. The plates contain probably records of grants from kings of lands or property to the temple. But though I tried much I could not read the inscription: it was illegible in many places. But that the language was Sanskrit, the concluding words, *Sakalam idam purushai parkilayapi*, showed. This is the Ati Sukshama Badri.

We now mount up the Shudh Badri, the goal of the ascetic of India. The road, which is now only eleven miles, is not so dangerous as the one from Vishnu Prayaga. In places the valley of the Ganges presents the appearance of an oasis in the desert of barren hills covered with snow all round. The as-

cent is steep and the way long. But the pilgrim knows that his trouble will soon be over and onward he goes, staff in hand, shouting "Badri Vishala Lal ki jai," not minding the roar of the Ganges below, the hills over head or the narrow and rough road in front. At Hanuman Chatti he is shown the place where coals of a sacrifice performed by Raja Maruta several thousand years ago, are still found. Some traces of coal in the ground were found by digging deep, but whether they were of Raja Maruta's time or due to the nature of the locality itself, is not certain. We are now in the snows of the Himalayas (the Abode of the Snow). Here we have in front the snow-covered peaks, raising their heads aloft to the sky. There the Ganges has been bridged for about a mile by a natural bridge of snow, and it is a sight to see the water forcing its way several thousand feet below this mountain of snow. The Rishi Ganga, a mile below Badri, is crossed by a bridge of snow, and we have snow above, snow below, snow right, left—all round. The world is entirely lost from the view amid these snow-covered hills, and if the mind is not elevated here from Nature to Nature's God, it cannot be elevated anywhere else. How majestically silent is Naure here! It tells you not to be too prying into her secrets, but bend your head in awe and admiration, and learn how insignificant a creature is man compared with the marvels he sees in these hills around him. The rishis looked upon the Himalayas as their heaven, and there is no doubt that they are the gates of heaven to those to whom the world has lost its charm. I reached Badrinath in the afternoon of the 24th May, and at once went to bathe in the Tapta Kund, a hot spring close to the temple. Here again we see the hand of a benign Providence. Bitterly cold all round, and yet you have a very hot sulphur spring in the middle, a plunge into which at once refreshes you and relieves all the fatigue and trouble of your journey. The pool is supplied with water by a spout in the shape of a dragon's head. As the water comes out of the spout it is unbearably hot, but becomes cool as it falls into the pool. The room through which the spring passes, presents the appearance of a nice and warm outer room of a Turkish bath.

The pilgrim has now bathed in the thermal spring and all his fatigue is gone, and he is now ready to pay his reverence to Shri Badri Vishal. The door of the shrine opens at about five in the afternoon amidst the din and rush of pilgrims shouting "Badri

Vishal ki jai." He enters the temple by a flight of steps leading into a quadrangle. The temple has not much pretension to architectural beauty. But it is a very old institution dating from the time of Sankara. Formerly there were no houses here, and the temple alone graced the vast table-land. The present Badrinathpuri dates from about 150 years. The table land extends for about three miles on one side from east to west and about half as much from north to south. The elevation of the place is about 10,400 feet. Higher up, about 23,000 feet above the sea-level, are the glaciers from which the Ganges takes its rise. The cold here is more intense than the coldest December night of the plains, and those who had some experience of the cold in January last, may perhaps realise the intensity of the cold in Badrimath during the end of May, when they are told that it was about half as much more as last January. The temple was built at various intervals of time. The inner sanctuary dates from Sankara's time, which, according to Indian chronologists, was 2,373 years ago, and according to European chronologists about 1,200 years ago. It is built of white stone with a deodar roof. Its inside is covered with gilt copper, and its cost is estimated to be about 1¼ lakhs of rupees. The design is essentially Hindu. The bell-house and the other rooms outside are later additions, and the cost was, they told me, about two lakhs of rupees. The temple carries a large establishment of priests, cooks and other servants, and is now under the management of the Raja of Tehri, in Garhwal. Under his management it now shows a good surplus, more than Rs. 40,000 being in the bank, and the Maharaja's manager, who is a man of much intelligence and business capacity, is very anxious to secure for it a permanent income capable of meeting all expenses independent of offerings from pilgrims. The total income of the temple is about Rs. 48,000 a year, and the expenses about Rs. 28,000. There are a number of villages attached to it yielding an income of about Rs. 7,000 a year. The income from offerings of pilgrims amounts to Rs. 20,000 a year, and the number of pilgrims is about 60,000 or 70,000. The chief priest is known as the Rawal, and is a Brahman of the Numburi caste from Kerala in Southern India, the caste from which Sankara came. The office is not hereditary but elective. When a Rawal dies, the manager of the temple communicates with the Raja of Travancore for securing another Rawal, and one who

fulfils the necessary conditions as regards birth, clan, &c., is selected. Learning is not so much regarded as other qualifications. The pay of the Rawal is now Rs. 100 a month. Formerly he was the sole manager of the temple, and at one time this led to much mismanagement of the temple funds. The temple was formerly managed by the Maharaja of Benares. But on account of distance his management was not successful, and it was made over to the Maharaja of Tehri. The Government does not exercise any direct control over its affairs, though it indirectly superintends them. I think the management of the temple should be in the hands of a committee presided over by the Maharaja of Tehri and consisting of men who would take more interest in its affairs than he can do consistently with his state affairs. The manager of the temple gets about Rs. 70 a month, and the staff is quite sufficient to control the affairs thoroughly if properly supervised.

It is now the time for Bhog and no one can go inside the temple. The *rasoi* is prepared in a *pakshala* inside the temple enclosure, where Lakshmiji is supposed to cook for Badrinath. The Bhog consists of rice of various sorts and dal; vegetables being scarce are not generally cooked. The Bhog, after the god has been served, is distributed among the temple establishment in fixed proportions, and from them it finds its way through Pandas among the pilgrims. Some of the rice preparations of the Bhog are dishes of a very superior order. There is, moreover, a system of gifts to the temple called *atka* whereby the giver receives a fixed proportion of food for what he gives and the rest goes to the establishment of the temple. Unfortunately, this *atka* has given rise to some litigation between the temple of Badrinath and that of Lakshmiji which is in the same enclosure, and I hope the Maharaja of Tehri will see that sacred institutions like these are not dragged before courts of law, and will set the matter at rest by compromise.

It is at about 9 o'clock in the morning when the great god is to be bathed. To the privileged few is accorded the Nirvana Darshana, that is, a sight of the god as he is in his samadhi posture, without any of the jewels or clothes that are subsequently loaded over his person. There are two rooms in the temple. The outside room, where the image is installed, has a door covered with sheets of silver. The outside room is covered with gilt copper. It is about

24 by 18 by 12 feet. The inside room is smaller still. The pilgrims stand by a railing at a distance of a few feet from the inner room. But the latter is too dark to admit of a full view of the image, unless you go very close, which is not the privilege of every one. The inside room is very insufficiently lighted. No oil, vegetable or mineral, is allowed. Only lamps fed by ghi are lighted and the light even in the daytime is very dim. They light camphor for privileged visitors and then you have a full view of the god. I suggested to the authorities of the temple the necessity of lighting the place better, and proposed their putting up an electric lamp in the outer room. But it will be very difficult to manage a battery there. At all events, the matter is worth serious consideration, both from the fact that it is necessary to prevent accidents, when there is a rush of pilgrims, and to allow those who have made such a long and difficult journey a fuller view of their favourite deity. The question of properly lighting the temple is as important here as in Jagannath, where also the light is very insufficient. I do not think the object of the sastras is to prevent people from having full *darshana* of the object of their worship. There are no texts to that effect in any of the Smritis or Puranas that I know of, and I think in these days of improved lights for all purposes of everyday life, our temples should not employ means of lighting which, however sacred, are insufficient to afford light to those who resort to them. In Badrinath, on account of the temple being under snow for more than six months in the year, greater ventilation than is now available is not possible. But better arrangements for lighting the place ought at once to be made, and I commend the matter to the attention of both the Hindu public and the authorities of the temple. A bright electric lamp, will, I think, meet all requirements and might be put up without much trouble.

The image of Badrinath is a very old and historical Indian relic. It was brought out by Sankara after diving in the Narada-kund about seven times. It is of grey stone in the "padamsana samadhi" posture. Close by are images of Uddhava, Narada and other great Bhaktas. When decked with clothes and jewellery, the image of the god presents a magnificent appearance. But it is grander and more elevating to have its view in the "nirvana" posture. The "singhasana" upon which he sits is worth Rs. 4,000

and the jewellery and clothes about Rs. 7,000 or Rs. 8,000. In winter, when the temple becomes buried in snow, all this treasure is brought to Joshi Math, and when the temple is closed for the winter, a lamp containing about two measures of oil is lighted by a wick as thick as a wax-candle.

There is enough ventilation in the temple to let the candle burn, and when after six months the snow is removed and the door opened, a green light is seen. If the candle goes out, it is considered a bad sign, and a year of sickness and drought is feared. The whole arrangement of the temple shows that it is simplicity and rigid asceticism itself. At night the god is not given a luxurious bed as in other temples; he is left with only a silk cloth and a girdle. In the winter all furniture and jewellery are removed, and he is again left as an ascetic should be.

This is a brief account of one of the greatest institutions of the Hindus. There is not the slightest doubt that the very air of the place is elevating and even the most sceptical man feels himself the better for living in this sacred place. Here from Vishnu Prayaga onwards you see Hinduism in its most primitive condition. No Mahomedan face is seen here, no worker in leather finds his way up to Badrinath. There is not the slightest chance of animal food of any description, or any intoxicating liquor finding its way here. All is pure and good, and superstition and dogma have not been able to destroy the sanctity and purity of the place to the extent they have done elsewhere Every inch here is sacred ground. I walked outside the Puri, and how serene and quiet the country was all round! The snows of the Himalayas extend as far as the eye can reach. Down below, near Brahmakapal, where the pilgrim offers oblations to his ancestors, is the Narada-kunda in which Sankara dived for the image. The water of the Alakhnanda is so cold, that it requires some courage to dip one's hand in it for even a few minutes. There is an inviting cascade rushing down the hill close by, but the water is too cold to drink.

We must not, however, linger in these sacred haunts longer than the prescribed period, but must hurry back to the ordinary humdrum life of the plains. Before doing so, let us have a glance at the men and women of these places. Primitive simplicity is the great feature of their lives. Thefts, lying and cunning these people know not. You can trust a hillman with your most precious

belongings without being sorry for it. These men have a deeper sense of religion than our people in the plains, and some of them rise superior in their simple faith to many of our learned professors of religion. Often I heard them singing their songs in Pahari, and on getting them interpreted, found them permeated with a deep religious sense. Their women, though poorly clad, have graceful features, and even their rags sit gracefully upon their persons. Some of the Bhot women would beat many of our society ladies in point of grace. What one ought to admire above all is their freedom in meeting strangers. Their character is generally good, and their freedom is therefore all the more impressive. And yet how strong and surefooted they are! One of these creatures has just placed her little household in a basket and her baby over her pots and pans. She ties the basket to her back and leads a child of about seven by the hand over a steep ascent of some six or seven miles, and reaches her destination before others who had no such load to carry. Another woman comes from Managaon as a coolie. Off she runs with a heavy bundle of about a maund to the next stage, which is full eleven miles, and gets there in about five hours, none the worse for her journey. The same is the case with the men. The coolies, who are brought to our camp every day, carry us and our luggage cheerfully to great heights for the very low rate of 4 annas per man per stage—not because they care for the money, but because it is the order of Government. Over the roughest ascents these people carry us along with a boldness which is truly surprising. And yet how timid they are, how mortally afraid of the *bemári* (cholera)! There is no trade in these parts. The only things that are sold are hill produce, like musk, salajit, hides, blankets, &c., and except a few cereals like wheat, rice, madhwa, nothing is produced here. The people are pastoral, and their wealth consists in their cattle. Goats are the chief pack-animals. Buffaloes and cows are only reared for milk and ghi. In Badrinath there are only two *annachetras* where food is freely given to the needy. There is no dispensary, though there is a post-office there. The climate of the place is not very healthy for dwellers of the plains, who often become sick and carry back incurable diseases as a *prasada* of their journey. I think something should be immediately done to alleviate the suffering one sees here at every turn. The

sight of men, women and children appealing for medical relief at every stage is very heart-rending, and I wished my stock of medicines, which I distributed freely, were greater and the means at my disposal ampler to afford relief to these suffering people. The pilgrim here is at the mercy of the coolies, and the coolies from the Tehri side are not a good lot and care more for their money than for the comforts of their clients. It is a common practice with them to place their Kandis on the edge of precipices where the loads are in constant danger of tumbling down. One such case occurred in my presence and an old woman, I tried to save, met her death by the carelessness of her coolie. Cholera, diarrhœa, dysentery, cough, colic are most common among the pilgrims, and many of them were found lying on the roadside away from all medical help. The Chattis, where people lodge for the night, are generally very dirty, and there they are huddled together, getting bad food, badly cooked, to eat. The Government is doing something to ensure cleanliness in the Chattis, but I am afraid they are not proceeding in the right way about it. They insist upon the shopkeeper undertaking the responsibility of keeping the Chattis clean or employing a *pasban* (watchman) for the purpose on Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 a month. The shopkeepers, of course, chose the former alternative, with the result that the Chattis are not kept clean. I think the Government should themselves employ sweepers for the purpose, and if they cannot afford to do so, levy the charge from the shopkeepers. This is one of the most crying evils of the pilgrimage to Badrinath and the cause of much suffering and mortality among the pilgrims.

I should conclude by suggesting—(1) that the road from Vishnu Prayaga to Pandukesara at least be immediately repaired, either by Government or from the Temple funds so as to minimise the risk to life which it now presents; (2) that in the pilgrimage season a system of medical relief be organised for the treatment of pilgrims on the road; (3) that ordinary medicines, like quinine, peppermint, chlorodyne, camphor be distributed at each Chatti among shopkeepers and patwaris for free distribution among pilgrims; (4) that instead of one, two or more hospital assistants be employed at places where there are dispensaries, one remaining in the station and the other touring among the pilgrims; (5) that in large Chattis two, and in small Chattis one, sweepers be employed by Government, either from public funds or from rates levied from shopkeepers; (6) that suitable

arrangements be made for lighting the temple of Badrinath, and that the influx of beggars, like the Nagas, who commit robbery and extortion in the name of religion, be stopped. I hope these suggestions will commend themselves to Government and the public, and that something will soon be done to make the journey to Badrinath more comfortable and less trying. I look upon my visit to that sacred place as one of the most interesting incidents of my life, and shall always remember it with feelings of pleasure and reverence.

V.—Practical, Religious and Social Reform.

We have, in the preceding pages, dwelt at some length upon the present condition of our society and shown all reform in religious and social matters to lie in the attainment of the ideal of unity. All our best thinkers, both in the past as well as in the present, have had no other ideal in view, and the difference observable is in the steps laid down for its attainment. And it is because we, in modern India, seem to forget it, and instead of going to the root of the matter, are trying to make the tree look healthy and bright by pruning the branches, that we are so often unsuccessful. Our innumerable creeds and castes and subcastes, our infinite systems of worship, our varying beliefs, and the various tongues spoken by us, if looked at superficially, are sufficient to bewilder not only the ordinary but the educated mind also. And yet beneath all this babel of tongues and apparent confusion of sects and castes, there will be found a principle of unification which, if kept steadily in view, is the only beacon light in this otherwise impenetrable darkness. How this underlying principle has been lost sight of in the war of creeds and sects and divergent schemes of reformers, is painfully apparent to every observer. If we are to believe the advocates of *status quo*, we should let things drift on, unmindful of what is going on around us, of the numerous forces at work in our society and of the march of events in the rest of the world. If we are to follow the revivalists, we ought to revert to the good old days of India when there were no railways or steamships or foreign government, when life was simple and wants few, towns that could be counted upon fingers'-ends, and petty kings ruling their small states under the guidance of Brahmins or making war upon each other. If the

advocates of modern ideas are right, the struggle for life, the hurry and competition, the breakdowns and premature deaths and decay, the turning of man into a machine, ought to be our goal. The future of India does not, however, lie in blindly following any of these, but in taking from all what it needs for present requirements and making it subserve to the principle of unity.

Taking the revivalist's view first, does he really wish the India of to-day to have all the various *yagnas* which were in vogue in the Vedic times with their attending destruction of animal life? In those times they had *yagnas* for everything, from procuring of rain and wealth to the destruction of enemies. The wealth of the country did not go out of it. On the contrary, it poured into it from outside. Then kings like Rantideva, Janaka, Rama and Yudhishthira could well perform their *Aswamedhas* and *Rajsuyas* and give fabulous sums of money and gold to Brahmins, and the highest could cheerfully undertake the task of serving them The Brahmins were also learned and devoted to truth and duty, and though they accepted the gifts, they never hoarded money, but immediately gave away all they had got. If they wielded immense spiritual power, they also made good use of it. The gods were invoked in a spirit of love and equality. Indra and others drank *soma* in sacrifices as friends and companions of the Aryans. Kings attained to the status of the gods by their merit and reigned as Indras till their merit was exhausted. When the sacrificial horse was let loose armies had to follow it to fight whosoever ventured to capture it. Viswasrij yagnas in which kings used to part with all they had, were not uncommon. The ceremonies were, moreover, not the lifeless and the formal ones they subsequently came to be. Brahmins discussed at king's courts, disputed points of religion and philosophy, and were rewarded for their labours. Can we say the same of India of the twentieth century? There is now no raja possessing universal sovereignty like Yudhishthira, nor do we find the Vashishthas and the Yagyavalkyas of old amongst the Brahmins. Any petty raja who would let off a horse for an Aswamedha, shall soon be brought to his senses by either his own people or the British Resident at his court, and might find himself elsewhere than on his *gaddi*. If he attempted to give away all his wealth to Brahmins, he would be soon set right by his brothers and cousins, or by the British Government telling him to take up some other pursuit than

that of governing a kingdom. If you attempted a yagna for destroying your enemies, you would be none the better for your pains. Perhaps you will set the police after you. The plague is now committing havoc in all parts of India, and even the modest proposal of all Indians joining in a prayer to the Almighty to rid us of this monster, met with an amount of opposition which was unexpected. To call upon people to perform *yagnas* as they were performed in the Vedic times, though it may flatter national vanity, is therefore not practical in these days. The other day the Vedas were carried in procession in Delhi, but what good did it do to the cause of religion? A *yagna* according to the Vedic methods was also lately attempted to be performed in a native state in Rajputana, but the ceremony only added to the wealth of a few Brahmins and did nothing more. In Benares and other places, Pandits now and then perform *yagnas* where the gods are invoked and the Vedas chanted after the good old method. But that also leaves no permanent impress upon society, nor can it be said to be a step in the direction of revival of the Vedic religion. In the matter of worship, also, if we are to follow the Vedas, there shall be no temples as in the Vedic times. But who will remove all temples and images from our midst? Few Hindus would tolerate the idea and any reformer who told them to do so would soon find himself in a serious position. Great is the merit of gifts of all your wealth to Brahmins, but the Brahmins must be men of learning and piety, unattached to wealth and possessed of a spirit of renunciation. But where shall we find for these givers of all their wealth, receivers possessed of the qualifications laid down in the sastras? There were no Vaishnavites or Saivites or Shaktas, or any other sects in the Vedic or the Smriti or the Epic periods, nor were the many jarring creeds and dogmas which are now preached here, preached in those days, nor did each claim to be the only exponent of truth, nor the only guide to bliss here and hereafter. We wish we could follow the Vedas, and abolish all the sects, creeds and systems of worship now found in the country, as it will conduce to national unity and well-being. But who will go first, and will not each claim to remain and see the others go first? Then, as to the various places of pilgrimage, each of which claims to be the only sacred place on earth and its priests the only guides to heaven. Here also we do not see men of learning and piety congregating

for the discussion of religious truth and enlightening each other on the best means of securing future bliss as was done in the past. On the contrary, vice and drunkenness are very common in these places. Disgusted with the ways of the worldly-minded, you turn to those who profess to have given up the world. But there also you do not see much of renunciation. If you tell the Sanyasins to give up all their maths, their incomes, their numerous disciples and return to the Vedic ideal of owning nothing and hide their head where the sun sets upon it, and look upon all with an equal eye, you will be none the better for your pains. Among Pandits and men of learning, also, your only chance of finding a hearing is possession of money and promise of gifts. In the temples of the gods, too, there is more of show and pomp than of worship in the heart. In Brindaban and Mathura in the month of Savan, Krishna swings in cradles amidst costly European furniture—lamps, chandeliers, mirrors and pictures—to the great delight and amusement of the masses. His *lilas* (adventures with the *gopis*) are celebrated by singers and dancers who have now ascribed to him many more of such sports than was done even by the author of the Bhagvata or the Brahmavaivarta Purana. The priests of these temples are as often as not men of any character or learning. Were we to revive the ancient system of worship, much of what we now see in our temples, priests, pandits, maths and places of pilgrimage will have to go. It will be a good thing, but no revivalist is seen to undertake it in serious earnestness.

The other alternative is not to attempt to reform, which is impossible, with reference to the altered conditions of our society, and we shall therefore have to keep up the old ideal of unity and try to attain it not through the ceremonial (Karma Kánd), but the knowledge portion of the sastras. The universally true ideal of the Vedánta, *Tat twam asi* (Thou art That), the gospel of love and mutual help, of recognition of every one as your own self in everyday life, of merging of all limitation and isolation for the good of all, is the only true gospel for India. Any other is bound to fail. The requisites of success are work, love, cheerfulness, self-reliance, fearlessness and purity; in a word, cultivation of what in the Gita is called the *daivi sampatti* (Divine attributes), a spirit of true renunciation and recognition of the value of work for the sake of work. This is the only possible line of action for those who wish

to see the Hindus form one nation with common aims, fired with a common zeal and striving after a common goal. People are now making festivals in honour of Sivaji or Guru Govind Singh or Rammohan Roy or Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar. All these men were great in their own spheres, but they were not national heroes like Rama and Krishna. The latter's birthdays are celebrated more or less universally in India. The *Janam Ashtami*, the day of Krishna's birth, and the *Ramnaumi* of Rama's are well known to all Hindus. The gospel of both was work in the true spirit of renunciation ; and if we Hindus require a national festival, as we do, we cannot do better than observe the *Ramnaumi* or *Janam Ashtami*, not merely by keeping a fast for the day and making a show of the hero's birth at noon or midnight, but by devoting the day to meditating upon what he said and did, as gathered from the Rámáyana and Mahábhárata and determining to bring it into the spirit of modern life. In Japan they have recognized the principle of tempering past conditions with the new spirit of freedom and equality. We shall also have to do the same.

In matters social also, it would be very desirable, but it is not possible for many years to come, to revert to the Vedic ideal of having only four castes and sweeping off the numerous subcastes and their divisions now found in India. So also would it be to have inter-marriage between castes, as was the case in those days. But it is a dream not to be realized. Any Brahmin who would attempt to marry in the four, or a Kshatriya in the three, or a Vaishya in the two forms of marriage prescribed by Manu, will soon find himself outcasted, and perhaps much worse. No one even among Brahmins now-a-days gives his daughter to a ritwija (performer of a sacrifice), having decked her. If one were to take a girl by giving a pair of bullocks to the bride's people, he will be looked down upon by his community. No Brahmin will tolerate his girl and a candidate for her hand meeting together and consenting to live as husband and wife by the mere promise of performing dharma together. No Kshatriya can dare to carry off a maiden by killing her relatives. If he did, he shall soon find himself in a jail or on the gallows. If he attempted to carry her off when she was asleep or drunk, the Penal Code will soon set him right. Swayamvara (marriage by selection) is well nigh impossibe even among rajas. Even a Kshetraja son, born through *niyoga* and recognized by Manu, will not be allowed to inherit the wealth of a

Brahmin or any other person. The rules of studentship of the Smriti times, if followed now, would soon result in many a student giving up his studies. No Brahmin would consent to partake of the food of a person of another caste, as was done in Manu's time. If we are to follow the Vedas and the Smritis, the whole of our social system and way of living shall thus have to be changed. In matters of marriage, especially we wish we could revert to the old ideal of marriage, after one had finished his studies and the girl had developed, but even the little reform in the age of marriage of girls stirs up opposition even in states governed by Hindus. Thus, in matters of social life, it is as impracticable to revert to the Vedic, the Smriti or even the epic ideal as in matters of religion. Taking caste as the first great item of reform, the greatest advocates of revival will unfortunately be found to be the greatest advocates of caste exclusiveness. On the other hand, the numerous castes and sects of India are increasing instead of decreasing in number, each claiming to be higher than others, and its claims hotly contested by the others who do not wish it to come into its ranks. Were the Brahmans allowed to have their own way, as some of the orthodox would wish them to have, many of them would like to keep all the learning to themselves, letting others remain as ignorant as before, no work to do, and plenty of money and worship to enjoy, no discrimination in matter of gifts, and everything belonging to every member of the community to be the property of the Brahman, learned or unlearned. But will this, even if possible, be a desirable condition of things for the innumerable wielders of ploughs and labourers in the fields, zemindars owning properties or carrying on trades or professions, or occupying posts under Government? None of them would like to live in jungles upon roots and fruits and give up all he has. The same applies to the other castes.

The fact seems to be that in a highly complex and greatly divided society like ours, neither revival nor *status quo* is possible. *Status quo* is not possible without leading to extinction, while revival out and out, is not possible without causing rupture for which no one is prepared. Adoption of foreign habit of thought and action is even more impracticable, because no society can afford to disregard its past, nor at one sweep destroy the work of centuries. On the contrary, if we gradually broaden the basis of our society and make it less exclusive and its groups less mutually re-

pellant, spread true education both among males and females, have marriages at proper ages, inculcate a spirit of love and charity in place of a spirit of isolation and uncharitableness, have a common language like Hindi, impress upon all the necessity of recognizing every one as your own self, not only in realms of religion and philosophy, but also in every-day life we can hope to do good. As Swami Ram Tirtha says, "If you want to live in the present century of marching and advancing industries and arts and not die by inches of political consumption, do capture the Matriswa of electricity and enslave the Varuna of steam, become familiar with the Kuvera of scientific agriculture. The purohits to introduce you to these gods, are the scientists or artists who instruct these branches of knowledge. Do see God in nature, but as something more; see Him also in the laboratory and the science room ; let the chemist's table be as sacred to you as the Yagna fire." We are now great admirers of Japan, and may well learn the secret of her success in the solution of the problem of national reform. "In emerging from an Asiatic hermitage to take our stand upon the broad stage of the world, we were," says Mr. Okakura, "obliged to assimilate much that the Occident offered for our advancement, and at the same time to resuscitate the classic ideals of the East. The idea of the reformation is clearly expressed in the Imperial declaration of 1868 in which his present Majesty, after ascending the throne, stated that national obligations should be regarded from the broad standpoint of universal humanity." ("The Awakening of Japan," p. 162.) The chief factors in this progress were the elevation of womanhood, promotion of liberal education, ethical training based upon the teaching of earlier days, resulting in the readiness of every Japanese to march to certain death at the word of command, upon an ever-willing readiness to offer oneself as a sacrifice for the whole nation in patriotic love which recognizes no limits. We in India must also learn to do the same. The "Night of Asia," as Mr. Okakura calls our present condition, should now disappear under the light of the rising sun of liberalism based upon that cardinal teaching of the Vedas *Thou art That* brought into practice in the way it has been done in Japan by the recognition of every son of India as our own self, and basing life not upon artificiality or dogma, but upon the broad principle of unity, love and sacrifice.

ओं तत्सत्

ERRATTA.

Page	Line	*For*		*Read*
Introduction, X	32	anicent	...	ancient
XII	31	sociae	.	social
17	26	latter	...	later
22	27	atina	...	atma
24	26	its	...	in its
30	4	tradional	...	traditional
30	25	bend	...	bind
31	5	00,000	...	100,000
33	2	Vasdso	...	Vasdeo
34	11	has done	...	which has done
34	28	ourselves with	...	ourselves more with
36	1	II	...	I
36	2	मनंसि	...	मनांसि
45	18	Dhusar	...	Dhusars,
51	36	religiuos	...	religious
61	25	Books	...	books
63	10	ealize	...	realize
70	29	fortunate	...	unfortunate
73	1	*means*	...	*mens*
75	30	to do	...	do
77	28	Syndhya	...	Sandhia
80	33	Sundar-Kunda	...	Sunder Kandá
82	30	mantained	...	maintained

Erratta.—(Contd.)

Page	Line	*For*	*Read*
86	20	and thought deed	thought and deed
87	3	its ...	it is
91	6	Sustrata ...	Susruta
93	33	They have both have.	They have both
93	36	ascetic and self-denial.	ascetic self-denial
107	10	मोच्चयिष्यामि ...	मोच्चयिषयामि
128	23	mind ...	mire
134	6	Prabháda ...	Prahladá
134	32	his ...	this
147	26	crosses ...	cross
156	29	with the Dhanwantri.	with Dhanwantri
158	20	dedica ed the ...	dedicated to the
159	17	Singh ..	sing
169	13	cast ...	caste
187	20	whoss ...	whose
191	32	is ...	are
193	2	दीनषु	दीनेषु
193	10	भ्राम्यन्ति ...	भ्राम्यान्ति
195	24	represent ...	represents
196	11	नाल्पे सुखं मीस्त ...	नाल्पे सुख मस्ति
197	30	Gandapada ...	Gaudapada
199	26	the Swatamarama	Swatamaramá
200	2	consist ...	consists
205	6	too ...	to
211	19	The Brahman Sutras	The Brahma Sutras

Erratta.—(Contd.)

Page	Line	*For*	*Read*
215	36	post ...	pool
215	38	gyotir ...	Jyotir
226	34	Matter and soul the body.	Matter nd soul are the body.
226	36	wroking ...	working
228	26	alone knowledge	alone
251	2	arise ...	arises
261	9	idier ...	idler
263	6	गुणेश्वतेषाम ...	गुणैश्वतेषाम्
270	6	no ...	so
278	3	hearts ...	heart
282	36	malá' ...	mata
282	37	repeat ...	repeat or say
285	38	cited ...	cited to show
290	36	often ...	of ten
291	8	shoul sould ...	soul should
296	15	wordly ...	worldly
296	28	than ...	from
300	22	emerging ..	merging
300	29	abides ..	abidest
300	30	leads ...	leadest
303	2	Indis ...	India
305	28	exhobition ...	exhibition

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Of the many merits of the book may be mentioned its to-the-pointness, its copious extracts from the Mahabharata—the mainspring of Hindu wisdom—and its able statement of the Advaita position. We accord it a hearty welcome and trust it will find its way into the hands of every son of India, as well as of those who have got to do any thing with him or his.

(*Prabuddha Bharata or Awakened India, Mayavati, Almorah—February* 1900.)

....They (The Catechism of Hinduism and Hinduism, Ancient and Modern) treat of nearly the same subject, and will be most welcome to all who may wish to obtain a clear and concise idea of the true, pure Hindu teachings, and of the great ethical ideals which are the real basis of all the Hindu religions and sects. Both books are works of love, and written by thoroughly competent sons of India; both inspired by the loving thought of reformers who want their country to return to the pristine purity of thought of the initial Hindu revelation..........

The second work (Hinduism: Ancient and Modern) is probably a little more ambitious as well as voluminous, though the leading idea is the same, namely, the gathering of the teachings of Hinduism from their most authentic and recognised sources, in a condensed form, free of all sectarian and controversial bias. The writer, a brilliant member of the N.-W. P. Judicial Service, is thoroughly qualified for the labour, and his love for his native country allows him to fully recognise what India now is, and what she ought to be. ....And thus closes a book, on certain points of which we may differ, but which will certainly prove as intensely interesting to the patriotic Hindu intent on the uplifting of his nation, as it will to the foreigner who wishes to know what benefit to himself can be derived by the study of Hindu ideals.

(*The Theosophist,*

Madras, March 1900.)

This is a work of great importance to the student of Hinduism, from the pen of one of the leading representatives of progressive thought in Northern India, and sets forth in a short compass not only the essential features of the Hindu religious ideal, but also what it had done for the nation in the past and what it may be expected to do in the future, if faithfully and intelligently followed.............

We have no hesitation in saying that the book is eminently fitted to serve the noble object which the author has in view. Living as we do in times of stress and storm, when the search-light of modern scientific and philosophic criticism is laying bare the weaknesses of ancient dogmas and traditional faiths, we cannot too highly commend the attempts of men like Mr. Baij Nath to separate the accidental from the essential in the time-honoured religion of India, and help the rising generation in passing through the crisis without giving up what is noble and soul-satisfying in the past, while assimilating what is bracing and beneficial in the present. Mr Baij Nath has proved by a formidable array of authorities from Hindu Scriptures that Hinduism in its essential features has nothing to fear from the assaults of modern enlightenment, and that it does not in the least stand in the way of Modern India aspiring to rise in the social and political scale.

(*Brahmavadin, Madras,*

March 1900.)

Rai Bahadur Lala Baj Nath, Judge, has written an admirable book on Hinduism, ancient and modern. All the salient features of Hinduism, both theory and practice, have been briefly but ably dealt with by the learned author..

Even from a hurried perusal of the book, one can at once see that the author has not merely depended upon English translation of Hindu Scriptures, but has acquainted himself with the originals in Sanskrit. He has thus been able to catch the true spirit of Hinduism, which one so often misses in the writings of the oriental scholars of the West........................We are glad to see that the author has realised the fact that Hinduism was once a living religion, and all that now remains of it is the outer form, the substance being gone...............What has pleased us most is that the author has not a harsh word to say against any particular sect or community, and has treated all the subjects in a calm and judicial temper. Though a reformer, he is not an iconoclast; though a patriot, he is not a blind admirer of the past. His fight is not for the past or the present, but for Truth.

(*The Brahmacharin, Jessore,*
April 1900.)

We hail the publication.......................................
..........From all accounts, Mr. Baij Nath is an expert, competent to speak with authority.

(*Indian Cristian Herald,*
Calcutta, 6*th January* 1900.)

......It is a book written with a purpose. Mr. Baij Nath has not forgotten the scholar in the patriot, and even as a patriot he steers a middle course. In his opinion "the future of the country lies neither with the out-and-out revivalist, nor with the out-and-out inconoclast." He has drunk deep at the wells of English as well as Indian literature, and he has visited many of the chief places of Europe as well as India. Considerable portions of the book were originally read in the shape of papers before the Internatianal Oriental Congresses of Rome and Paris. It will be remembered that Mr. Baij Nath presided at the last Social Conference; his presidential speech is printed as an appendix in the volume before us.

(*Indian Social Reformer,*
Madras, 28*th January* 1900.)

To sketch within the compass of a book of a hundred and forty pages the past and present of Hinduism—social-life, caste, religious ceremonies, the position of woman, ancient and modern religious beliefs and philosophies, Indian heroes, the great epics, some of the other Sanskrit and Hindi works—is a bold attempt, and most readers will feel that the author deserves to be congratulated on having compressed so much interesting matter into so small a compass......Unlike many collections of published addresses and papers, these are welded into a book with a distinct unity and a clear purpose running through the whole......To the European reader the first chapter will prove the most interesting, for much is given about the life of the people which is not familiar at all............Once again we commend this book of Mr. Baij Nath's to our readers. It is written in a broad and generous spirit, and should take a high place among hand-books on Hinduism.

(*Indian Daily Telegraph*,
Lucknow, *January* 31*st*, 1900.)

Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath's new book on comparative Hinduism, as taught in original sources, and as illustrated in practical life, will be certainly welcome to the public as a treatise which records the result of a genuine desire for social and religious reform, chastened, if not moderated, by an industrious research into all the best literature in the Sanskrit language bearing on the subject. We believe Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath was not unknown to this distant Province before he was secured as the President for the Lucknow Social Conference. But his beautiful address, delivered as such President, drew public attention to him more pointedly. Revival *versus* Reform has been a controversy of some standing. But Lala Baij Nath, as President of the Social Conference, dealt a blow to the controversy when he declared that no Hindu revival can have any other object in view than the removal of all barriers which impede the progress of the Hindus in the march of civilisation, an object which the social reformers also have in contemplation.

......and we are glad to find that among the ranks of the Presidents of the Social Conference, one is found after all who can take such a broad view of the queston of reform as Lala Baij Nath has done.

(*Mahratta*, *Poona*,
18*th February* 1900.)

It is, we believe, the first attempt by a Hindu gentleman to place before his people a sketch of the Ancient and Modern Hinduism in an appreciative form. The book abounds in noble sentiments and is suggestive of healthy lines of action to workers in the cause of India's regeneration.

The book is one of the most important and valuable contributions to the reform-literature in this country ....It is written by a Hindu gentleman........who is the staunchest follower of the school of thought which claims thousands of adherents from amongst the orthodox Hindus; hence his voice is bound to command a respectful attention in all quarters in the Hindu community. The book constitutes a strong protest against the irrational idea that ancient India was wholly without any noble features. Mr. Baij Nath enumerates the customs and usages current in the olden times, discusses their utility in a calm and judicious spirit, and vindicates the glory of the past in an unequivocal and unmistakeable language. The service he has done to the cause of reform in this manner is inestimable, and we wish the book were extensively circulated among the people. It holds up noble ideals before the Hindus and contains a number of highly feasible suggestions in connection with the practical work of reform, which ought to occupy the serious attention of those engaged in the moral and spiritual regeneration of this land.

(*Arya Patrika, Lahore,*

3rd and 10th March 1900.)



